DOWN HOME WITH JENNIE ALLEN

GRACE DONWORTH

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She says he's got lots of little ways his father had at his age — 2 weeks to-morrow

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BY

GRACE DONWORTH

Author of "The Letters of Jennie Allen to her Friend Miss Musgrove"

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY

FREDERIC R. GRUGER

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IN MEMORY OF

My Mother

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ILLUSTRATIONS

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DOWN HOME WITH JENNIE ALLEN

CHICTOOSET, MAINE, May 15.

WE 'VE reached the Promised Land.

My brother Jim and all his fambly and Mandy my poor afflictuated sister that takes fits though not to sech an excess as formally and having more gleams now every day of her life so she can be trusted to wash the glasses and Ed and me. After living ten years in the citty where we was very plessantly situated and longing all the time to come back for a vissit as soon as we could lay enough money to the old home where me and Jim and Mandy lived with Mother — here we are at last.

And here I — jest plain Jennie Allen that was — here I have become Edwards Spinney's wife.

It aint but a half a month since I 've been his wife and it wan't sech a very long spell ago

that I didn't even know the world held a man like him. But it don't seem now as if there ever was a time when he wan't in my heart. When I go back and try to think when it was he first began to steal into it I keep agoing back and agoing back till it seems to reach a time when I didn't know him at all.

Why was I asetting there in our home in Providence year in and year out happyer than any queen that jest made rappars for Clapp and Parmer and helped with the work besides? Of course there was everything to make me contented, the greatest blessing of all being I could fetch my work home and be with Jim's wife and children and Mandy (that needed me so) all the time.

I had all the joy of the children's pretty ways and their first words and everything. And when Jamesy, the one nex to the baby, was took away, I had the comfort of remembering I had n't lost one hour of that precious little life God had give to us. How my heart aiks for mothers and aunts that have to go

away to their day's work and leave all them blessed things to other folks to enjoy! Yes, I had them all but in addishen besides to this there was a little bird kep asinging all the time in my heart that there did n't seem to be full reason for. It sung and sung and sung long before I knew what song it was asinging. I know now. And I guess there 's lots of things that the heart knows before they enter the mind. How could I dream that the day Jim come home and said he 'd found a lodgar for the 3rd. floar frunt that was a nice good-hearted lively feller as ever was, he said, and in the insurance buisiness and was n't partickler about noise (an importunate point on account of our little boys getting beyond themselves at times) but jest wanted a comferble place to lay his head and would sweep it himself when it was nessesserry — how could I know that then and there there was opened a heaven on earth for me?

When I think that before that I was agoing round like one scizzer, as you might say, it 's

hard to realize that I felt so happy and useful.

I aint calling every person that 's single a scizzer, though. Some of them does very excellent work as gnives or something else that don't have to go in pairs at all. But I think I am distinckly a scizzer.

(" Shear nonsence," says Ed who is alooking over my shoulder, but he aint atelling me to scratch any of it out — I take notice of that.)

It 's jest beautifull for us all to be back together in the old Chictooset home. Sis (my brother Jim 's the only brother I have got's little girl) says it 's like the Israelites entering the Promised Land and all her father needs to be almost exactly like Aaron when he personally conducted them is to have a double inishel to his name — like Jjim. I aint any doubt that the Israelites was tickled enough for one reason and another to get into Cana, but when you consider that none of them had ever been there before (like us older folks had been

born and raised in Chictooset and even Sis was born here and had some little recollection of it) and when you consider that everything was new to them I 'd like to put it to any one how it could compair with us acoming back after ten years to our old home where we lived with Mother. And I guess the answer would always be in the neglitive.

We own the old home yet and the fambly that leaces it and ockipies it summers has always said we could have it anytime to make a vissit at from Octobar first to June first. So we 've all been planning for many years to sometime spend the month of May there when we got the means. Now don't it happen jest beautifull that the first summer we 've got the means is the identickle summer that fambly is atravelling in forren parts and (sech is the intenshen) not to come back till first of July!

Two whole months for us all in the old home, and one of them months *June!* I guess there aint one of us yet that 's fully sensed it 's really true.

Most the first thing we saw when we was agoing round looking at things was the place where Jim had gouged out places with his knife when he was a little feller on the settin-room wall. Praps his little boys wan't tickled to see that!

Then there was the old milk-account on the inside of the shed-door where Mother used to make a long mark for every quart of milk she sold and a short one for a pint, and the place at the bottom where they was all added up. I recolleck Mother wan't very spry about adding up them collums. Poor little proud-sperrited Mother! How well I remember how she 'd say to Jim when he 'd got considdable along in his arithmetic and he 'd get stuck in a sum and wanted her to help him out, " You 've got to an age now, James, when you 'd ought to depend on yourself. Mother 's helped you all she could in the past, dear, but I guess you 'll feel better about it if you get along without her now."

I never suspicioned then but I see it now that

she was putting up a little bluff because she wan't ekel to them hard sums seeing some of them got to be reglar brain-rackers along the last of the book.

Dear loving soul. The problem she was arressling with all the time after Father died and we was little was the one in short division when she was atrying to divide a pityable little sum by 4 and get something for an answer that could be seen by the naked eye. She could n't throw no light on A and B going into business and A putting in 1/15 of the capital and taking out 7/8 of the proffits and what did B gain by the transaction. But on that other problem she never stopped working day nor night.

And I guess that even on Sunday when she was asetting with us so calm and still in the pue and was the most genteel-looking person in the meeting-house probbly that planning and cackleating was still agoing on under the neat crape bunnet. I 've got that little bunnet yet and if anything should happen to it there aint

anything in this world that could make it up to me. And now when I raise the crape band I see how little there was to spare on it and if that or the plain bow had been one dite narrerer the old frame beneath would have shown bare. There 's lots of things we prize because they was Mother's but this bunnet almost *is* Mother.

I remember and I guess Mandy aint likely to forget it either because me and Jim aint ever spoke a harsh word to her partly because we respeck her afflictuation even if Mother's last words to us was n't to be alwers good to Mandy, something that happened a year or so ago. One day in Providence I got home from the shop with a new bunch of rappars to make and Mandy says,

" Mrs. Ezry Sawyer 's been in. She 's ahelping get up an entertainment down to the church for the Lone and Wearys and she wants a comickle old-fashened bunnet for one of the girls to rig up in. She said she 'd seen sech a one in your beauro drawer once when it was

open and wanted me to lend it to her. She said — "

"You did n't let her have it!" I cried. "O Mandy, don't tell me you give her Mother's crape bunnet! I shan't ever forgive you as long as you live if you done that!"

I guess that 's what I said but I don't hardly know what I *did* say.

Mandy turned white and looked as if she was agoing to have a spell.

"No, no!" she says. "I told her I could n't give it to her. I told her she must ask you."

But I run to the drawer to make sure it was safe. And I took it up like it was something living and loved that had been saved from sorrer. I recolleck how I laid my cheek against it.

"O Mother, Mother!" I says. "I wonder when we see you again and you are awearing your golden crown if you can ever look so precious to your children as you did in this!"

CHICTOOSET, May 16.

ABOUT the spendidest day ever was. The mud drying up in spots.

We had a beautiful time atraveling down here on the Frederick Morrison which is called the floating pallis by the shores and indentations of our native state. It has got lovely red plushed furnitur and lace curtains and all the lugsurys of the season. They say they set a beautiful table, too, but as the folks was eating and it was covered with a cloth when we peaked into the dining-room we could n't say as to that. We had talked it over a long time before and we had settled down that we had better pay one $ extry and have a state room seeing we had so many bundles of vareous discriptions, including the baby's bath tub which we drawed strings to see who would sleep in it, and much to Mandy's intence joy the long-

est one was drawed by her. Her and Sis had made a bargain beforehand if one of them drawed it they would invite each other to ockupy it with them so they done so with the addition of little Gussy. The rest of us slep in the lady's and gentlemen's cabbin which was fixed up very neat and Sumptuous, with plessant people around that was as easy to get acquainted with as ever I see. I dont know when I 've been so taken with any stranger as what I was with a lady that was awaiting for a long time for her turn with the hair-brush that was in the cabbin and chained underneath the looking-glass. It seemed as if her chanst would never come and her just as patient and nice though sea sick to a marked degree. She said her liver was the kind that was very easy put out and yet she 'd give it up twice to two (2) other ladys — I mean her turn — jest because they made out they was worse than what she was and the importance of geting up on deck as prompt as possible. Me and Mame told her all about our trip to take up her mind and what

it was mostly for and she thought it was jest beautiful. She could n't talk so very connected herself on account of having so many personal interruptions but she told us quite a lot about herself and her daughter in East Boston she had been avisiting and what an interesting baby it was for 3 weeks and named for her for the middle name but the name in general leading off with Gwendoline on account of it being a fancy of the father's, that was in the soap business and doing well, though country born and raised. Her name was Mrs. Elmiry P. Ingalls of Deer Isle and I sent her a fancy postel card as soon as I got here. She give us a lot of cookys that she knew she could n't keep down for the children and Mame gave her one of our lemons. We had two and we could halve the other one up among us.

She was still asetting in line when we left her and went up to the state-room with that patient and peacefull look still on her face between times.

We found Mandy and Sis and Gussy in great

sperrits and all dressed and waiting for us. We had left our vittles in their care and it was our plan to take out our camp-stools and eat them on the deck. While we we were agetting things together Mandy told us all that hapened the night before. She says, "The children was asleep and I was saying my prayers when a tall plessant faced boy come in and asked me what I wanted. I excused myself from my prayers and told him I had everything I wanted but I thanked him kindly jest the same."

Jim says Mandy uselly manages to have that so by not wanting very much. It 's true that my sister is very plain and simple in her necessitys and requirements, we have all took notice of that.

"But," she continued, "I told him long as he was there he could help me on with my life-preserver for the night seeing I did n't know jest how it went and he done so jest as nice and handy as could be, laughing and smiling all the time. I dont know when I 've seen sech

a nice cheerful boy, and not a grouty bone in his boddy that I could see. I want Bub to get acquainted with him.

Then I says, " The children is used to washing their hands and faces in warm water and I want to know if we can't have a little from the kitchen in the morning when the teakettle boils if so be it is convenient."

" Nothing easier," he says, ' When you want it jest push on that butten (he called it a butten — that little gnob set into the wall that I 'd jest been examining before he come in,) ' jest push on that butten and you 'll get all the hot water you want.'

" Sakes alive! " I says, ' What a contrivance that is! What 'll they be agetting up next! "

But this morning soon as light when I held the empty pitcher under the gnob and pressed onto it and although I pushed with all my might there want a drop come. I suspitioned it was out of kilter because I could hear a loud buzzing sound inside the works. While I was aholding it there the boy come arushing in and

"But," she continued, "I told him long as he was there he could help me on with my life-preserver for the night."

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when he saw me he hollers out, " Leave go o' that! leave go o' that! "

" It ain't come yet," I says, speaking very gentle, seeing I knew it wan't his fault and not turning my head round very much for fear it might spurt out sudden after all and me get scalt. " There ain't a drop come yet though I been a pushing a long while, I guess the works is out of kilter. You better find out and see. I 'll hold it here while you 're gone."

With that he laughed and grabed the pitcher and brought it back full of boiling water in a whiffle of an eye. It shows how much them new contraptions amounts to and foarcing you to go back to the old-fashioned way after all."

By this time we 'd got the lunch ready and all had gone out on the deck. My! if it did n't taste good! I 'm atalking about the lunch. There was a nice high-toned gentleman with a sad and depressed expression of countenance asetting near and when Mame cut the pie Jim made motions for her to offar him a

peice. She done so which he declined but seemed awful pleased and his face lighting up with a merry smile as he had been to breakfast. He looked like a man that was having trouble but was atrying with all his power to keep it down.

You can't help respecting a person of that discription. We was drawed into conversation with him and Mame who was dretful scairt of being sea-sick asked him if she could reasonably expect to be when she come of a long line of sea-captens, and he says there was no telling about sech things but he thought in a case of that kind herredity would n't count for so much as environment.

Then Mame asked him what he 'd tryed himself as a remmidy when he 'd been seazed with it and he said a good doce of something that sounded like ferra-terma was the only thing he knew of and Mandy said she wished we 'd brought some with us seeing her insides was far from steady and salt-fish and lemon seemed to aggrefy and intensify it.

Mr. Riley (that was his name, he give Jim his card and Jim was kind of mortifyed he did n't have none to give him, seeing there 's always so many little things acoming along that requires money, and he had n't ever seen his way to it, but Mame said she 'd give more for the " James S. Allen " he wrote so nice and careful on a piece of paper and handed to him than a large peck-basket of the fancyest cards) Mr. Riley turned his head away quick at Mandy's remark but Mandy did n't suspition he was alaughing. Maybe he was n't. Maybe —

Anyway he was far from well jest recuperating from Diabetes of the heart, so he told us, and all alone in the world and having no one to share his joys with him.

Gussy was coaxing his mother for a cent to buy some sassyfrass wafers, because he had spent his nickel before he left home but Mame says, " No, you got to learn you can't eat your cake and have it too."

" As to that," says Jim, " I 've found gen-

erally speaking that that 's the only way you 're *sure* of having it."

" Except on shipboard," says Mr. Riley.

We was kind of disappointed that we could n't see the water. The fog was so thick you could n't hardly discern the other end of the steamboat. We felt rather bad not to see the familiar islands and other things mostly on account of the boys as Jim wanted to point them out as objecks of interest.

But we made believe we was in space flying from one plannet to another and the noises we heard but could n't see from the schooners and beweys was other heavenly bodies asignalling to us as we flew by.

But all to once — and we can't any of us ever forget it — all to once the fog lifted, and everything was so clear and bright and beautiful that we felt like shouting a sarm of joy. O anybody aint ever seen anything so lovely as the coast of Maine.

Jim was aholding Gussy on his knee when

the mist clared and the little feller looked up quick into his father's face and says,

"O Father! Is Heaven agoing to be prettier than Maine?" and Jim says, them honest eyes of his full of waking-up memories, "I don't know, but it 's got to try awful hard to be — ain't it, Son?"

Later.

What struck as very foarcible and seemed to bring its lesson with it was this splendid great steamer with all its fraight, human and inhuman, asailing so magestic acrost the sea and when you looked behind not a sign left of her where she passed throgh, but the water smooth and glassy as if there had'nt a thing happened to it. Mame said serten pollitishens up our way reminded her of it that made a terrable chowing and blowing and a tooting yet would leave no marks behind.

"Excep the wake," says Mr. Riley.

May 17.

THIS plan about writing everything down in a diary I got from Miss Musgrove. When we was leaving Providence she says,

" Jennie, you probbly wont have no more time to write them nice long letters you have been asending me ever since our friendship begun seeing you will have so many new dutys of vareous discriptions to perform and," with a sigh, " I 'm agoing to miss them more than I can say."

Ed remarked that was puting it mighty strong for any woman.

" But," she went on, " why don't you, seeing you have got this happy fasillity of converting your thoughts to paper, why dont you keep a Diary? "

" It would be very hard for me to keep it," I says, " or to keep any book of the kind that has got blank leaves in it, the young ones is

so apt to tear them out for their sums and spelling-lessons, to say nothing of tickets for pin-shows. Me and Mame has had more than one receipt book badly mutillated up in sech a manner. That is the way we lost our rule for eggless cake which was made up and give to us by a freind that has now passed on.

Beyond the shades of earthly joys,
" " call of her little boys,
" " reach of whatever annoys,
She lays asleeping.

That was what her husband wrote and put in the paper the time she died. There was 3 verses in all but I can't only seem to recall that and the next one which was as follers:

No more her voice 'll be heard in the choir
Afloating from gallery up to the spoir
To foller her soon duth her husband desoir
As he sets weeping.

It was his wish to have them calved on her tombstone and gave orders to that effeck. But

Salomy, his second wife, (stone cutters as well as everybody else is kind of slow in business mattars in Chictooset and he 'd married again before Sol Perkins got around to doing the job) Salomy said that sech things was no longer considered to be in good taiste and jest a neat little stone with her bare name on it (she would n't even include *Wife Of* ect because she said it made her shudder to see her dear husband's name mentioned even incidentally on a tomb-stone) was what was used in the highest cercles, and so them verses was lost to prosterrity.

Maybe it *aint* good taiste as she says, to have sech things on monuments but the way things is going now the grave-yard of the futur will be a terrible dull and uninteresting place to spend an afternoon in. There wont be no more Sunday afternoons of whole famblies and freinds spent there areading the pretty verses and the children spelling out them beautiful passidges from the Bible (it was there me and Jim and Mandy partly learned to read) and

no more getting down on your gnees and gently scrouging the grass away from the bottom of the stone to see what the last line of the verse was, and commiting them off by heart and being a comfort to you when trouble came because so many was words of comfort.

The new ones all look like store-signs — nothing but *William H. Swathy* in plain big letters.

Mother's is jest beautiful. It has got erected in loving memory to Hannah Allen at the top and then "Her children rise up and call her blessed. Her husband also and he praiseth her."

I told Ed I was going to try to live so I could have jest the same on mine and for him to have it so if it could be stated truthful but he says, "O Jen, stop! I can't bear it." And then he says, "What long, long wearisome years it took your poor mother to calve with her life them 2 lines. I want my wife to jest take things easy and not spend her life awriting eppytafts for herself or anybody else. And

you know," he says, " as far as her children rising up and calling her blessed is concerned, the present generation would say it could be said jest as well setting down."

That 's the way he talked but his face grew white and his hand that he took aholt of mine was cold. So I aint ever spoke of it again. But jest the same I shan't be so very much surprised if I get my eppytaft after all.

But to go back to that eggless receipt. Mame can remember parts of it very distinck and I can remember parts but the parts we remember is the same ones and that 's where the diffikilty comes in. I often think if she could recall the molasses and sody, for instance, and me the flour and shortening and creamy tarter all might yet be well. As it is, nothing but the creamy tarter and the molasses clings to either of us memories and the rest is gone forever.

And when you consider that all Bub wanted of the other side of it was to play tit-tat-toe with Farley Tortrum on, it dont seem right at

all. It seems all out of proportion, as you might say.

Every fall when eggs begin to scairce up Mame is sure to say, "O Jen, how differant it would be if we had n't lost that receipt. I feel at sea compleatly without it." It would n't make so much odds if that want the very time of year we needed eggs and everything nourishing we can get for the children to eat. They play pretty hard through the summer and fall and the first sudden cold spell comes they are more than apt to pune down and get kind of poorly generally. We give them thoroghwort when we can make them take it. We 've tried vareous ways of keeping them. We have packed them in salt and again we have laid them away in a preperation of water-glass but it aint satisfacterry. They 're sure to smell old and frowey and that eggless cake seemed to fill a long-felt want, no one ever suspicioning that it *was* eggless when they et it. I don't know as we 'll ever quite cease regretting that receipt.

Now I 've thought of a beautiful sequestrated place up garret to hide this diary away, but I darsent even write it down here not knowing whose eye might come acrost it and then run and hunt it up. I aint sure but what I 'll let Sis read some parts on account of her being so old-fashioned and maybe able to give a little help, at times, but Bub and Gussy, her two little brothers must n't even see it. As for baby David — well, he 's very hard on newspapers. I shudder to think of the effecks of a vallyable work like a diary in his hands.

Yes, Miss Musgrove said so much about how nice it would be to write down the incidents and happiness of every day as it went along and all the people and events that transpired that I made up my mind to try it. And oh! it 's jest beautiful. Some of my happyest moments is when I 'm all alone and a thinking right straight down on the page same as I be now.

Sometimes there 's only time for a few lines and other days I 'm so rushed with work and

interrupshens that I can't get at it at all. But I write when I can and it averidges up lovely.

I was telling Pamelia Newcome, that has book-kept down to Peter's store for a number of years all about it the evening she was here and about having to be kind of irreglear in my writing, some days more, others less, some days nothing at all, and she says, "Why that 's no way to do," she says, "To succede in anything you under take you 've got to be sistemattic. Where would *I* be and where would Mr. Peters's bussiness be if I carried on like that — no head nor tail and getting my ballence jest whenever it was most convenient and not conflictuating with any other interrests I hapened to have? Where, I ask you, would we all be?

"And," she went on, "the same careful methods that reggleates things in the buisiness worls had ought to be applyed to the humblest home ever was."

And she settled back with an air of great

sattisfaction and looked at me to see if there was anything I could say back.

There was.

"Pamelia," I says, very gentle (she spoke what she thought was the truth, not knowing nothing about house-work, her mother doing everything to home and only them 2 to do for excep sometimes to take the teacher to board when that teacher was a man — Lucreshy Atkins who had a disapointment in her youth fermly refusing to take in a man thogh ladys was more than welcome at ½ the price) "Pamelia, you can't deal jest the same as you do with figgers when you 're adealing with things in a home. Doing the work there aint like adding up a collem of figgers.

"Now if you could take, say, bread-dough and needles and thread and court plaster and brooms and mops and lamp-chimneys and callers and linnerment and spelling lessons, and soothing words and the clam-man and bumps on little heads, and turnips and wood-boxes and rock-a-bys and clothes-lines and Now-I-lay-me's and

patches — when all them can be multiplied by a dish-cloth or a flat-iron and give something deffernit and satisfacterry for a result — then, and not *till* then, can book-keaping and house-keaping be carried on on the same basiss.

But Pamelia shook her head. She want convinced. "Even them things could be sistemmized," she said.

"Pamelia," I says, "supposing when you was in the ack of adding up a nice long straight collem of figgers a *7* that you 'd added should without a minnet's warning straighten itself out into a *1* or hump itself over into a *9* and after you 'd gone back and added it according to its new appearence you would suddenly catch it hooping round into a 0, but in sech an unserten way as if it had no more idea of staying a 0 than *you* did and presenting strong simptims of changing to a *3* or an *8* at the slightest provercation. And *then*, Pamelia, *then*, supposing that in the midst of all this them vareous figgers would take a sudden notion to all

change places — kind of dance a Virginny reel, as you might say, up and down the collem and rampage round and interweave themselves generally. And then supposeing this want all. Supposeing one of the figgers, one of the littlest — say the 1 or the 2 — should disappear alltogether and you could n't find hide nor hair of it thogh you hunted all round that little coop where you work, and that very minnet Mr. Peters should put his head in the door that has got them long gray whiskers on it and say he wanted your ballence right off that very minnet. Then, Pamelia, and only then would you realize how feable method could be."

Pamelia put her hand to her head, "Is it as bad as that?" she asked.

"As bad as that, Pamelia?" I says. "Bad? Why it 's splendid! You don't understand it at all. Supposeing, Pamelia, you loved every identicle one of them figgers. So much so that when they rampaged you wanted to rampage with them. Yes, loving *all*, the human the

most but the, inhuman some what on account of them being a help to you in keeping the others comferble and happy. And supposeing one of the figgers came to you on a cold frostey morning pinched and blue and after it had sold you your quart of Clams kind of wanted to hang round your nice warm kichen a spell and tell you about its little crippled boy that had went to the hospittle in Bangor for an operrashen jest as you was about to set down to your diary. Would n't you listen to it, Pamelia, and tell it you hoped the little feller 'd come out all right and for him not to worry and to have a cup of nice hot coffee and postpone the diary for a more faverable occashen? *Would n't* you?

And supposeing again one of them figgers jest as you was agetting out your pen and ink should come arunning in and throw his arms around your neck (of course it aint the clam-man this time) and clime up and cuddle down in your arms with a brethless "Tell me a tory!" And you feal its confideing little body

warm against you and you can even feal its little heart abeating awful fast when it comes to the wolf part and I guess probbly this partickler little figger wont never be happyer than when at last Red Riding Hood gets free and the wicked wolf is killed. You see allthogh this was the very time set for the Diary you 've compleatly forgot all about it.

" Then still again, Pamelia, supposeing another of the figgers that you had every reason to suppose was perfeck should happen to have something occur right where the mop part joins on to the handle — and that right in the midst of you washing up the kichen floor and having jest exackly time enough to do it before Diary-time if all went according to skedoole. What are you agoing to do? Are you agoing to heave that figger down on the half-washed Flore where all the othar figgers will trip up over it and go to writing in your Diary like all possessed?

No you aint, unless book-keeping has divided and multiplyed and subtractifyed your very

heart from your boosom. And I guess no woman's heart can be done that to.

Pamelia hove a long sigh. I could see I 'd made some sort of an impreshen on her if ever so feable. We was on differant sides of a high fence, as you might say, and made as she was, it was hard work her glimpsing the things clear on our side. And furthermore than that, so Ed declares, fraimed & constitooted as she is, there can't ever be made a gate in it that 'll let her through.

" Well! " she says at lenth. " If that 's an accuret account of the sitooashen I don't see how there 's ever going to be any Diary kep at all! "

" Don't you worry about that, Pamelia," says Mame, " Wait till you see the Diary at the end of the year. You 'll find it ballenced all right, wont she, Jen? "

Can't see to write no more now on account of the shades of night falling fast and not a drop of kerrysene. Mame is awaiting for

the molasses to put in the gingerbread too. Bub and Gussy went to the post office store a long spell ago with the kerrysene can and the molasses jug for their respectable contents. Can't tell when they 'll be back, and most probbly listening to one of old Cappen Jefferd's yarns that don't do no harm as I know of excep taking your mind off from your dutys as in the pressant instants. He is a regglar Arabian knight.

But here they finelly come, tugging manfully the jug and the can, while Ed sings out in joyous tone, " Ah, here come sweetness and light ! "

CHICTOOSET, May 19.

A BEAUTIFUL Sabbath Day. Clear and bright and warm.

Mr. Wadkins preached a beautifull sermon on *effort*e. Ed says it was practickible a sermon as ever he heard.

He told us not to set down and wait for fortune to come to us. He says, "It 's an awful ancient and wore-out idea that the earth stands still and waits for the sun to come along and light up any part of it. Now we know that it 's the sun that keeps still and the world has to wiggle itself round every day to get light on it everywhere."

And he said the best test of how we done our work was to pursew our daily avocations in sech manner so that when the vale was lifted we could keep on, if need be, in the nex world with whatever we was adoing in this.

I thought that was jest beautiful. But when I looked at Ed he was almost smiling.

He was thinking how he 's in fire-insurance.

When we came out of the church, everybody gathered round us and shook hands and said again and again how pleased they was to have us here, and they are agoing to have their bean supper this month instead of last jest on our account. We aint decided yet what we 'll cook for it but we 're atalking it over. We 're kind of leaning towards an apple snow pie.

I wore my blue suit and Ed said — but I guess I wont write that down. But it 's pretty as it can be and trimmed so as to stimulate an overskirt.

Would add how beautiful it looked to see all the people once more agoing to church carrying their Bibles. I don't feel that we 'll ever get fully used to seeing the women a-entering the holy temple in the city with their pocket-books instead held in their hands. Ed says the differance is owing to the deca-

dence of the pocket among fashenable women — and nothing deeper than that. And furthermore than that he thinks that 's what makes women sech spendthrifts (having their purses so handy) and he 's a-looking forrard to the renny songs of the pocket (that keeps the purse below the surface) to bringing mankind back to the simple life.

CHICTOOSET, May 20.

I GUESS perhaps the little boys is having the best time there is. The first couple of days we did n't make no efforte to keep them boys within bounds. They roamed the woods and got lost and got found again, they set traps that did n't catch nothing but pieces of their close, they went afishing and tumbled in (Ed says it was probbly with the idea of getting the fish's point of view like the slum workers) and was fished out and whaled. Gussy fell from the top of the old ellum and broke 3 limbs. They was injered in a fight with two of the village boys that was jest able to go out the follering Sunday though this happened on Friday, till at last Mame told Jim if they wan't called to a halt that there would n't be no little boys to take back with us to Providence. So they have been modertated down as far as

they can be modertated down in a place of Chictooset's resoarces and still be boys.

Sis is jest as different as she can be. After she 's helped wash the dinner dishes she dresses up in her nice starched gingem and quite frequent goes acalling on her grandmother Allen's old friends, ataking with her a boquet of lady's delights and bleading hearts planted by Mother that 's still agrowing in the front yard. And aint Jim proud when they all say, as *we 've* alwers said ourselves, " She 's her grandmother Allen right over again right out and out. And poor old Mrs. Plunkett that 's very near her end and that 's aliving out on the County Road and aint quite all there, thought she *was* Mother and says, " Hannah, I 've thought it all over and I 'm agoing to let you make over my green popling for Lindy seeing she 's so set on it and me not reely needing it since I 've got my brown," — and the cinnamon rose-bush on her daughter Lindy's grave taller than Sis that very minnet.

Yes, Sis is a great faveryte with the old

folks here, being so old-fashioned and dependable though they all say, "But she 'll never be as pretty as what her mother was at her age — not if she lives to be as old as Methusalem." And that makes Mame tickled on her own account and mad on Sis's.

As for Jim, great big loving feller, he don't put much of his happyness into words but Mame says she believes he kissed the ground soon as he come when no one was looking. But Ed says *he* aint. He says he 's found something more risponcive and acks accordingly.

And Mandy, why Mandy is agetting so much good from it it seems to clare her head. She remembers about things here a good deal better than could reasonably be expected of Mandy and even behaving with great dignity and piety at our wedding.

"Mandy," says Mame after it was all over, "Mandy, you done splendid! How did you ever think to keep from talking at the most sollem parts same as we feared you 'd do?"

"I filled my mouth chock full of water,"

says Mandy, greatly pleased, " as much as it could hold. Then I *could n't* talk."

" Oh! " cried Mame. " You had n't ought to have done that. What if you 'd had to cough or sneeze! "

" But I did n't have to cough or sneeze," answered Mandy. And Ed says that 's very good loggic, seeing no argyment is vallid against a fack.

I aint agoing to try to write down about our wedding. How can I? How can you ever write about your own wedding?

It would be same as if you was made so happy by the birds that was aflying and asing-ing around you that wanted to keep that happiness for your friends and so you shot them down and had them stuffed. Your shooting might be ever so skillfull so that not a feather of them was hurt but you 've lost the joy of their song, and the blue of the sky they was aflying up into and the soft summer air that was ablowing all around. Them 's the things

we can't put with them under the glass globe in our parlor.

But memmery aint like that. Memmery would have kept them all for us.

Yes, words is nothing but stuffed birds, I guess, when it comes to describing your wedding-day.

The first great thought that swells your heart almost to busting is that you are Ed Spinney's wife, or whoever's wife you are. Then instead of that drowning all your other blessings it deapens every one.

And memmery is the only thing that will hold them all.

CHICTOOSET, May 21th.

SIS, that 's jest craizy over jography, has been showing me some pregressive maps of the U. S. that she 's been amaking and they have learned me more histerry than I 've ever known before.

It 's wonderful how much food for thought them maps sters up within you, the gradooal shifting of the little lines and the spreading out of the pretty pink color, like the flush of success, as you might say, till it covers it all over, — these things standing for ambition and strife and cornquest in some places and in others jest for religion or quiet toil.

Jest to think of that dite of a change in the line between us and Mexico that Sis's careful hand can make so easy. She says it took two great armies and thousands of deaths to draw that little line first and to fetch the pink color into that tiny sport on the map. It 's awfull

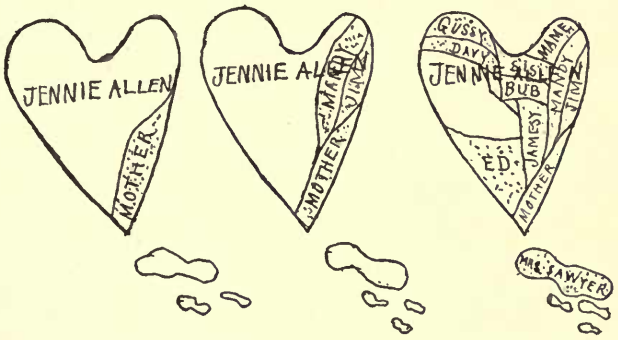
interesting to look back at the first map and see how much was unexplorated terratory or forren possessions and how little by little it all come to be ours and the places that was wilderness become known and prosperous and how a little to a time man was led to where there was great traysure hid up in the earth, and it busted out into great and wealthy cities on the surfiss, like corn apopping.

It makes me think our hearts are maps and they are progressive, too. It 's hard to realize that the big place representing Ed on my heart's map was, not so very long ago, all unknown and unexplorated territory. As changes comes into our lives old boundery lines change and regions is divided up into smaller parts.

When I said something like this to Sis (an old-fashioned child as ever was) she was awfull tickled over it and what is she doing this minnet but making progressive maps of Jennie Allen's heart. The first one when I was a baby and got nothing on it but jest MOTHER. The next has got places marked off on it for

Jim and Mandy. The third has got in it Mame and Sis and her four little brothers.

Jamsey, the dearest of them all God took from us again when he wan't but three but we 've left his place on the map and Mother's is there too. These make my Holy Land.



Ed has jest come in and is awatching Sis's work. He wants to know if he can't be my Texas because he wants the biggest place, and so he shall. "I 'd like to know who 'd be my Texas, Ed," I says, "if you aint."

Sis says she aint agoing to mark off Rhode Island jest yet but will keep that and a few others of the smallest ones in reserve. I

thought that that would be good for our friend we think so much of, Natalie Boshambray, seeing she is so little but Sis ("Napoleonnic Sis" Ed calls her) says Virginny and West Virginny is for Mr. and Mrs. Jason Boshambray because Virginny is where they live and they are so ristocrattic.

They come up here, they and their little boy, to our wedding and her and little Adrian is astaying on for a vissit.

If they are ristocrattic they dont put on no airs. Jason, who is reely the Count of Boshambray appears proud and distant to them that don't know him but Natalie, his pretty wife, is as sweet and impulsative as a little child.

I can't ever forget how on our wedding morning she come to me and says her bright face all love and eagerness, "Jennie, me and Jason wants to do something you 'll specially like in honor of the day. He 's give me a purse of money and I 'm agoing to use it for you to fulfill some heart's desire. Now what shall it be?"

And like a real fairy out of one of Sis's books with her pretty pink parrasol for a wand (she 'd jest come in from an early walk) the little figger stood in the door-way, waiting to hear my wish.

" Can I reely have anything I want? " I says.

" Anything at all," she answers.

" Then," I says, " please don't let old Capten Joe's pipe go out nex month."

She opened her eyes wide at this. Then after a minnet,

" It shan't *ever* go out as long as he lives," she says, laughing gleefully and ahugging me tight. " O why did n't you tell me before of this heart's desire of yours? "

And with a whirl of the pink parasol and aswinging her little gold purse, she was off — I know where it was, down to the post-office store.

When little Jamesy was took away and I tryed to do what good I could with the money I 'd been asaving up for his eddication, one

little portion of it went to light Capten Joe Silliker's pipe, that had gone out not from conviction but necessity, and to keep it agoing for six months. The time is almost up now and I 'd been apraying that little solace would n't be took away from him in his old age.

Now I know he 'll have it alwers, and a lot of other lugsurys she has promised so that his last days will be days of comfort and faith in the Lord.

O ain't Natalie got the kindest heart that ever breathed.

I 've jest took another look at Sis's maps. She 's got Mrs. Ezry Sawyer in for one of the West Indy Islands.

" I could n't give her a place with the rest of us, Aunt Jennie," she says, " I knew you like her same as you do everybody, but you 've got to have *some* forren possessions."

Sis aint very fond of Mrs. Sawyer herself and when Ed saw her out in the Carrie Bean Sea all by herself he says,

" It 's jest like womankind to interdooce the personal elliment even into jography."

But he need n't say that. It 's jest like dear little Sis to put her close by. Some folks in her place that 's had the same provercation would have found reasons why she 'd make a very excellent Kamchatky.

CHICTOOSET, May 22th.

WE got a letter to-day from Mrs. Ezry Sawyer out in Seattle and it was signed Mrs. Abram Cooty but that did n't supprize us as we had got her marrage invertations before. They run thus:

Benjaman John Sawyer, Esq
Requests the playsure of your co.
AT the marrage of his beloved mother
Mrs. Ezry Sawyer
To Abram S. Cooty of Seattle and
Cape Noam
Enter at the side door.
ect.

follered 3 days later by an excited note from Ben saying to send it back quick as we could. She 'd had them printed unbeknown to him and he was acalling them all in for fear that Cooty would get afowl of 'em. He said he

was scared he would back out if he did, " And Mother," he says, " has worked too hard to lose him now."

Well, Mame has sent her the *Chictooset Arrow* that told all about our wedding and a part if it was, " The Countess of Boshambray (that was Natalie) was souperb in a wonderfull embroidered gownd of white and yeller brocaid that was jest from Paris."

" O well," says Mrs. Sawyer in her letter to-day. " I expect she has close like them often enough and it wan't no trouble to put one on when she went to Jennie's wedding. Taint at all likely she imported it apurpose for it."

" Does she say that? " cried Natalie springing from the chair where she 'd been curled up areading and letting her books drop to the floor, when she overheard Mame reading that in the letter. " Does she say that? " And she scampered up the stairs and run down again with the costly gownd in her arms and before anybody could realize what she was about,

she 'd seazed the shears and half tore and half cut the lovely thing into strips.

" There! " she says, her bright eyes ablazing. " There 's the gownd I *did* import for Jennie's wedding and I aint ever going to wear it anywhere else. You can tell that woman that! "

Then she laughed and said, " But she 's so awfully funny and I 've enjoyed hearing about her so much I had n't ought to be angry with her," and she curled up in her chair again and was soon lost in her story.

It seemed like sech an awful thing she 'd done that we was all shocked and Mame ackchelly turned pale (it 's something she 's subject to) but Sis (the most pratical and commonsensical child I know) says, " Can I take the peices Mrs. Beaushambray and make a quilt for you? It 'll make a lovely quilt."

" Ye–es," came absently from the pretty red lips that was pouting over something in the story.

We have jest got a Seattle paper from Mrs.

Ezry Cooty telling about the wedding festivertys and the house where they are agoing to live. It says " It is in the subbubs where they can overlook a great expense of grounds beautifully laid out with part airs tastefully intermingled with statuerry ect."

Jim says he guesses it is the first expense she 's ever overlooked. He aint liked her since the time Sis overheard her say to Jason when he was to our house avisiting that we wan't nothing but jest ordinerry folks and the most she come to see us so much for was jest to ketch the broad *a*, " which you know," she says, " flourishes down in Maine in a manner that any Bostonian might envy."

" She 'll ketch something broader than the *a* nex time she comes," says Jim when he heard it alooking down at his big fist.

" O Father! " says Sis, " would you strike a lady? "

" Who 's atalking about ladies? " says her father.

She had spoke to me about that same thing

before. She says, " You folks was born with the broad *a* in your mouth and that 's better than a silver spoon in your mouth. You can *buy* your spoon."

But I always tryed to be patient with her when she was atalking sech foolishness.

I might as well write down here what she give us for a pressant. She was alwers fond of anteeks and she presented one she had on hand — an old pair of bellers. She had bought a pair of a dealer that she wanted to go with her old-fashioned fire-place but they told her it belonged to a later period and wan't sufficiently back to date for the purpose. Ed tried to make them work but he said he found they was inopperative and their mission would have to end in jest presenting a venerable appearance. Sis has wrote a poem about the wedding and in it it says (meaning the bellers)

" No matter how Edward tacked & pinned,
They never got back their second wind."

Captain Joe give us two ostrich eggs. He come in and laid them on the table himself.

"It aint much to give yer, little girl," he says, "but they 're different from the common run of aigs and I 've had 'em most 60 years. I wisht they was sollid gold but they aint."

"Course not!" says Bub. "A bird would be a goose to lay a golden egg."

CHICTOOSET, May 23.

NATALIE and little Adrian went away to-day. They 're agoing to Bangor where Jason will meet them and then all will go to Bar Harbor. They almost lost the boat for Natalie was ahugging and kissing everybody and saying so many parting words that she whistled twice before she got there. Then she and Adrian scampered as if they was both children as fast as they could down the road alooking back and laughing all the way.

How we are going to miss them!

CHICTOOSET, May 24.

IT was late this afternoon and me and Ed and the boys was coming home from a long walk in the woods all wrapped in our winter coats and overcoats because it 's one of the hardest things in the world to convince a Maine May that winter is over. You can quoat the calendar all you want to, but down here it don't do to take the calendar too serious. When the calendar says *May* the merkery says *must n't* (so Jim declares) if it 's a question of leaving off your overcoat or mittens. As for the Maine winters they 're tough accordingly. When Mame said she was surprised to see how heavy lined Pamelia Newcome's face was Jim said the weather required it. " A nice heavily lined face," he says, " is about the right thing for this climate."

We found a few May-flowers — dear tendar baby things — acuddling down under the leaves.

Everybody 'd warned us not to take up any roots with them on account of the new law that 's been passed that attaches a fine not exceading $20 for every root you pull up. All the boys and girls knows about it and they are scairt the root will come up before they know it when there 's somebody alooking.

I recolleck when that bill was interdooced into the legislater. Cess Perkins made that great speach in faver of it that was printed in all the Boston and New York news papers and brought Chictooset into notice that had n't ever known of it before. Cess could always make a splendid speach though he want no great shakes in any other way as a lawyer. That 's the way his nickname got tacked on to him. Folks call him " Necessity " because he knows no law. It was said to be the most forensick burst of eloquence that ever thundered among them archives. I remember beef extracks of it. It was jest after they had passed a law about lobsters.

" Why is it," he says, " that the lobsters of

our state is so carefully and tirelessly guarded by legislation while the Mayflower is allowed to roam unprotected over its hills? Is it because it twines any the less around our heart strings, or is it less in danger of extinctuation? Which one of them, I ask you, when our forefathers was asailing over the seas aseaking humble homes in the New World, which one of them was painted on their prough?

"Was it the lobster? I no nead to ask this audiance sech a foolish and idle question as that.

"O lawmakers of the State of Maine! Men who stand for sentiment and not for gread — for artistuousness and not for the palate's craving, if need be, let the lobster go, but preserve to us that tender Bullwark of our past — the little Mayflower."

Well we was walking kind of slow for whatever the weather was it jest suited us, when one of the boys (they'd all gone faster than us and got home first) come rushing out of the house and calls out, "O hurry up! Hurry

up! Poly Blittery 's in there and it 's the most fun there is. Come on quick! "

So we hurry upped and follered him in. There we found Mame awiping the tears from her eyes and Jim arolling round the floor in a parrotsism of laughter. And we did n't wonder. Jest to see him was enough, I mean Poly Blittery. I 'd been brought up alongside of him and his face had n't changed from what it was then, but the queer part of it was that now it was on top of a man's body and about the biggest man I know at that not matching up near so well as Sis's doll's head on Sam O'Thrace's winged victerry. He is now going on 33 and we had n't seen him since he was a boy, him being " off on the road " (as he calls it) many years before we went away. " Off on the road " is subceptible to severel interprertations and we don't know which one to choose, but it aint necessary for him to tell us his private affairs, as I can see.

Yes, he had the same round moon, happy face that had made itself at the school-teacher

"Off on the road" is subceptible to severel interprertations.

so often and got covered over with molasses when he helped lick out the empty molasses hogshead down to Ans Hewlitt's store, to say nothing of the face that hated soap and water as it did sin perhaps a trifle more if the truth was known. He went on a vissit once to his aunt's in Saugus Mass. and when he arrove there he was a sight to behold.

"Mercy sakes!" says his aunt agrabbing aholt of him and draging him into the house before the neighbors could see him, "Mercy sakes! Maine calls itself the cold water state but it appears there aint enough there to wash the little boy's faces."

"That 's why there aint," he says, "they drink it all up."

Well, the chairs was all too tight for him, he 'd tried the biggest of them and it wan't comferble and when he got up it come with him and Jim says politely, "Allow me to help you off with your chair."

So he was asetting on the lounge and the young ones was all round him listening to his

yarns — all but Sis, and she set a little ways off hemming one of our new dish towels she had give us for a pressant and looking at him by spells like he was some newly dug-up curiousity.

He 'd been the bad boy of Chictooset and it was his proudest boast same as it always is to any man. I don't see why it 's an unwritten law that it 's a disgrace to be the worst boy in school while it 's an honor to have been that boy after you 've growed up. If that sounds funny you jest turn over the men of your acquaintance in your mind and see if it aint so. There 's enough others claiming the honor for Chictooset for them times. Jim is one of them and I should n't wonder if even Willie Jameson, a perfect little boy saint if there ever was one is aparming himself off for it among folks that dident know him then. But by the time Poly was 15 he had sowed all his wild oats and had settled down into a lazy harmless critter that dont do much of anything but wander round the country eating and

sleeping where he gets the chanst. He calls it canvassing because most alwers he has some little contraption with him that he has got up himself but he says he dont do as much with them as he might on account of hating to pester folks. He is so good-natered and full of queer yarns that folks usuelly are glad to see him at the farm-houses where things is so dull and lonesome.

One day a woman where he was having dinner to her house that he said had ought to be happy seeing she was rich and had everything she wanted, set out to lecture him and told him riches dident bring happiness, that they brought cares and risponcerbilyties and the poor had a good deal better time than the rich. "So dont you go to envying me, young man," she says, "because all the fillosophers says that the poor is the happyest seeing their playsures are so simple and free from care."

"Lady," says poor Poly striving vainlessly to draw together his old coat so to cover his

ragged shirt (his preddycessor in the coat had been a smaller man than him) " lady, let me asure you that the joys of the poor has been greatly exagerated."

One year he spent about the whole winter in a sunny winder in Dr. Allison's office and called it studying medisen and he was a big help too in various ways to the Dr. holding people when they was having their teeth hawled ect. though when he got through he did n't know (so Jim says) your thorax from your metacarpus, but being forced to leave on account of the Dr. neading the chair, seeing Poly's plessant ways had broght him so much more cusstom.

When Jim introduced him to Ed as our old friend, Mr. Napoleon Blittery, Ed says, " Napoleon, is it? I don't see the Bony part."

He was saying when we went in that he was sorry our vissit had n't been the summer before so we could see his eddicated eels him and his brother Jethro had took to the fair. They was some that they had got out of the

Chictooset river and trained with untiring laber and skill (so he said) adding that the job presented so many difficultys at times they was tempted to give up in dispair.

"And there was jest one things that kep us from doing that."

"And what was it?" we asked.

"Why, we had n't been to work on the job a great while before we discovered that the eals themselves was showing an interest and putting forth an effort to learn sech as you would scarcely believe an eal was caperble of."

Even Mame looked up surprised. "How did they show it?" she said.

"In a dozen ways! We 'd been trying to learn them to coil up a certain way and once when we come upon 'em unawares I 'll be blessed if they wan't trying it by themselves — having a kind of rehearsal, as you might say, probbly with the intentions of giving us a little surprise later. Course some would say eals was always acoiling and uncoiling and acoiling and uncoiling again and — "

Here his voice got kind of indistinck and all his chins was asinking down on his chest when the boys hollered out,

"O please don't go to sleep now, Mr. Blittery. Tell us what them eals done."

He roused himself with an efforte. "Beats all how drowsed up I get. But it's on account of being out in the fresh air so much, I expeck. I've took up with this fad of sleeping out door, you see."

"O Mr. Blittery, tell us quick about them eals!" cries Gussy.

"Well I was asaying that some folks would say that that was the only way eals have to amuse themselves — to keep acoiling and uncoiling and I admit the little critters' resoarces for killing time is sadly limmited. But look here! Ever you see an eal wiggle himself up into a letter of the alphabet — *S* for instance? Or a couple of eals co-operating so to form the *D*? Ever see that?"

"No," the little boys admitted brethless.

"Well, that's what we saw and if you

don't believe it you can ask my brother Jeth when you see him. I wish he was here this minnet to constantiate what I 've said."

"O there aint no need for that," says Mame politely. "We would n't believe it any more after he said it than we do you."

"Well now that 's kind, uncommon kind," he says, and riz right up (the young ones dropping from him like worms) and went over and grapsed her hand and shook it. "Old friends," he says, "that 's always known you and had confidence in you is the best friends of all. It don't make no odds how high you 've climbed the sociable ladder (and you would think he was addressing us from the top rung) no matter how high you sore and all the lugsurys and refinements that go with it, you can't wrench and eradicate from your heart them tendar (I had almost said holy) ties of former days."

"O Mother, Mother, keep still!" cries Bub; "you 've got him acrying so he can't talk."

Sure enough. A couple of big tears had oozed out of his eyes and was meandering down his fat and rosy cheeks. He made no efforte to wipe them away and I thought it was on account of him being proud of producing sech a creditable pair of tears. But Sis knew it was because he did n't have no handkerchief and went up quiet and slipped hers into his hand.

" Now that young one knew as well as we did," says Jim after he was gone, " that them tears did n't have no deeper soarce than your lackrymal gland but that did n't make no odds about her helping him out. Gracious! If her Grandmother Allen was alive we would n't hardly know which was which. I could almost see poor Mother doing that very thing, could n't you, Jen? "

Well, when Poly got off that speach to Mame all afloat in tears she says keeping her eyes down on her sewing, " And we always say the worst there is to say right to your face."

"You 're saying it to a big audience when you do that," says Ed.

"Aint you ever going to tell us about the eals?" says one of the boys.

"Yes, yes, to get back to the eals again. Where was I?"

"You was where they was making S's and D's of themselves," says Bub who did n't doubt a single word of the story.

"O yes. Well, as I was saying, when we saw what them poor dumb slippery things was adoing, trying to improve and express themselves and above all striving to please us we was teched to the heart. And was we going to give up then? Was we, I say? You might as well ask of the winds and the waves. We certainly was not. We wan't doing much else at that time, as it happened and we devoted several months to this task. At the end of the time (though I say it that should n't) we was pretty proud of the results that had culminated. Our little pets could now answer 10 questions."

"How 'd they do it?" asked all three boys to once.

"Well, we kep 'em in a tub that was very large round at the top where they had plenty of room to spread themselves. We named the biggest one and the one that appeared to be the head of the family Diogenes. We 'd say to them, 'Who do you like best?' and they 'd throw themselves wholly into the task of answering. It would be like this: "And he took an old blank book out of his ragged pocket (it required far reaches into the lining to find it) and with a stump of a pencil he drawed a picture like this:

"And when we asked what they was the most afraid of they would fix themselves like this:

"Then to the other 10 questions —" "I thought," says Sis, "that there was 10 altogether."

"Yes, and that was right. I had a couple in mind when I spoke that we was foarced to give up on account of them taking a stubborn fit and refusing to carry out our plans further. 12 was the number we planned on but when we planned we had n't reckoned on this obsternacy in the eal's character. It was a theary of Jeth's that them eals had mule blood in 'em somewheres. There wan't no other way, he said, to account for them stoping short all in a minute and refusing to go any further. I know one thing. There 'd been a pair of dead mules hove into the river jest about where we got them and if there 's any truth in the saying that 'the part goes to the part,' they got it all right. The only part to a mule worth mentioning is his durned contrariness."

"What was the other questions they did answer?" he was asked.

"Why, to 8 of the interrogertorys of vareous kinds they would reply

or

"Well," continnered Poly, "when we'd took the hint that they would n't answer no more questions we got 'em to take the parts of tails to our dogs."

"O Mr. Blittery! how could you?"

"How could we? You ask after you've learned of greater deeds they'd performed? Why, that tail stunt was so easy in comparison that we'd put it on after the cattychism was over jest as a kind of relaxation — knitting-work, as you might say. Jeth and me between us had three dogs at the time and as it happened they all had doctored tails (having fallen from a high estate with fashenable

people) and we 'd farsen them eals on in place of them and we learnt them to wag like real tails when the dogs was patted on the head or spoke pleasantly to or give a nice bone to. Then they would hang down and droop in a pathetic manner if the dogs was addressed in harsh words or give a kick."

" !!! "

But the boys said it with their eyes. They would n't speak now and interupt the story.

" And the dogs on their side was tickled enough to have something to wag and droop seeing how long it had been since they 'd had that privilege. So dog and eals co-operating in sech a satisfacterry manner no wonder our effortes was crowned with success."

" What did the folks at the fair think of em? "

" What did they think of 'em? What could n't anybody help thinking of them? That they was probbly the best eddicated spessymens in the fish world! "

"Why," says Sis, "they was the *only* ones, was n't they?"

"No, not quite so bad as that. You 've heard of schools of fishes often enough, have n't you? I hapened to come upon a school of mackerel once when I was swimming round Eastport and it was awful interesting. I shan't ever forget the look the teacher give me (she was a sizable shark and the look was n't so much from her eyes as from her mouth — you know sharks have awfull expressive mouths) when she saw me. But being a good swimmer I knew I could get away from her if she happened to take a fancy to me so I stayed a spell. She was giving them a little talk about how to avoid fish-hooks. It seems there had been a fishing party near there and the mortality — or should I say fishality — had been something terrable. I guess there wan't one there by the way Miss Finny spoke but had lost some friend or relation by it. A collection had been took up for the sufferers."

"Had it been done off fishally?" inquired Ed.

"Yes, and the net result was very large," responded Poly, who then went on to say in answer to questions from the children that for books empty clam shells was used — "that is, empty of clams but not as to some pretty good literatoor, jedging from the interested expressions on the little faces. While I was there," he says, "a messenger-fish come in with a big lot of the shells from a shop. Him being a C–O–D carried its own sinigafance and was a deliket way of announcing what was expected of the fishinee. He 'd come in so noiseless, (adragging the goods along behind him on a string of sea-weed) that the teacher did n't see him till a little mackerel timidly raised his fin and told her he was there."

"How did you know — " began Gussy, but Poly says, "Now look here, Sonny, aint you been told it aint polite to interupt and ask foolish questions when you are being told a

story to? I 'll have to stop jest where I be if you continner to pester me."

He wan't interupted again.

" Taking it all in all," he proceaded, " it was as interesting a school call as I ever paid. You can see that I was hendered from getting a reel connected sense of what went on by having to go up to the surfiss ruther often to breathe. I 've thought more than once of it all since and if I could find the exact location of the school again, I 'd borrer a diving-suit sometime and make a more extended vissit. It 's true there 's disadvantages of teaching in the water," he says thoughtfully rubbing the pencil stub round in his hands, " but (so it seems to me, anyway) these is more than counterballanced by the tremendous advantage of the time saved in not sending the little scholars home to have their faces washed and the time spent in the fire-escaip drill every day can be devoted to other, if not higher, things. And of course like all young school things they was

more or less inclined to do their share of cutting capers; but the sure nolledge that in case of misbehavior their teacher would promptly eat them up acted as a strong deterrent influance."

"Did she eat any of 'em up while you was there?"

"No, because when she begun to put on a hungry look and I realized it was near lunch time I withdrew after apologizing for calling in the simple costume I was wearing. But as I swum away I looked back (though it came to me how easy it would be to turn to salt in that environment) and saw that school was dismissed. The little ones was aswimming out of the cave two by two in time to a fish that was aflapping his tail against a rock and it was as pretty a sight almost as I ever see. The whole bussiness was a complete relevation to me." And he relapsed into silence like he was living the episode all over again in his mind.

Nudged by the children, Jim asked what become of the eals.

"Well, they was counted sech a marvell at the fair and nobody ever saw the equel to them that we was offered 500 $ for them.

"And did n't you take it?" asked Sis looking pitying at his poor old close.

"No, I did n't, and I 'll tell you why. The man that offered it I did n't like the looks of. He was a sport and used his money awfull free but when it come to kindness and dealing with a poor dum thing same as you would be done by, he wan't there. And strange as it may seem we had a genuwine affectation for them eals, especielly the largest one in the tub that we 'd named Diogenees. I can't tell you how much I thought of him."

"A good eal, I dare say," says Ed.

"Yes, and they 'd showed plain enough that they repriscopated. So we said no to the man and stuck to it. He tried to steal 'em out of the tub when our backs was turned but what did Diogenees do but wiggle himself over to where I stood and give the alarm. I shan't forget the cold tech of his nose as it reached

my hand. If the critter that called himself a man had n't been a good deal smaller than me I 'd given him my opinion of him in the sign language.

" Well, we was jest agoing to ship with Captain Peaslee on a vyage to Australia and we knew we could n't take them with us and we 'd got to give them to somebody. Jest then I saw a nice motherly-looking woman with a lame child and pleasing address and thinks I there 's kindness in that face if there ever was one. The little girl was compleatly fassenated by our little pets and clung aholt of her mother's hand and beged her to let her stay through one more performance. So I put them through their stunt again jest for her benefit and after a nice little talk with the mother it ended in us presenting our treasures to her for that little child. Bless you! them eals knew as well as we did that they was being left in kind hands. But they showed their sorrer, too, in the only way they had to express their fealings. They 'd given us a

good many surprises from first to last but I vum if we was anyways prepared for what they done at parting. Well, sir, when we bent over the tub to take a last look at them what did they do but wiggle themselves into this:

"I don't know as I've ever seen anything more remarkable. Lord only knows how they found out how to do it. It's enough to know that they did do it and that they ackchelly shed tears besides. So much so that the water riz an inch and a half in the tub. O eals know a good deal more than you think they do."

The boys asked him if he knew where they was now, and he said he did n't because in the confusion of parting he 'd omitted to take the lady's address, but having a dim idea it was up Mattawaumkeg way.

"I thoght you said she had a *pleasing* address," put in Ed.

"I 've got a feeling, though," Poly added, "that I 'm agoing to see them eals again some time, I 'd feel bad enough if I was n't."

Supper was ready by this time and when he got up to go to the table we took notice he walked lame. Jim asked him what the matter was and he said, "Nothing much, only being a little sore. I went into Cess Billings the other day and it happened to be the day after he got defeated for county treasurer. I told him I 'd been having a bad run of luck and asked him if he would n't help me out. And he did. That 's all."

At the table he told us a lot about his Australian trip and about them getting cast on an island that was ockipied by cannables. He told us that he fell among some of them but they got the idee he had germs about him which he encurraged and they would n't even taste him. He says he did n't have any notion before how up to date cannables was, adding

that they 'd passed a pure food law and was awful particular what kind of missionaries they put up. "They get aholt of our newspapers, too, sometimes," he says, "and in a wedding account of a young missionary jest astarting out once they saw where it was stated that the bride was 'a woman not too wise and good for human nature's daly food.' Coming from such good authority you can guess what happened as soon as she landed."

Poly 's awful good company. "I fetched home," he says, "acouple of cans jest for a curiosity but I give 'em away. I thought maybe I had one of the lables with me (searching deep in to his pockets) but I don't seem to find any. I can give you an idee, though, what they 're like." And with his pencil stub he drawed this picture that I 'm sticking on here.

"Being considdable out in open as what you are," says Mame, "you must take good deal of account of the ways of the birds and the beasts of the feild, dont you?"

"Good land, yes! We all do."

He always said "we" when he meant tramps as if tramping was a reckernized profession and he was proud of being a leading membar of it.

"Yes," he says, "them and us gets on pretty familiar terms so that we understand one another about as well as if we was of the same order of creation. The birds now! You 'd be supprised to see how many of *our* ways they observe and take advantage of — (I don't mean no mean advantage — no bird ever does that, except a crow, and a crow does it every time) but jest kind of adaptuating their ways with ours when it 's praticable and for mutuel advantagiousness. Nice little things birds are when you come to know 'em, freindly as can be and ready to meet your every soshel advance. A robbin now has got as plessant a disposhen as you 'd wish to see and a ren is an awfull agreeble little bird once you 've won their cornfidence. Cat-birds and woodpeckers is apt to be irrattable — *terrible* irrattable, at

times especielly if they 're put upon. If they get their breakfast-worm in good season, all well and good. If so be Mrs. Sparrer or Swaller don't hapen to have their bug or worm ready jest as soon as their bills is puckered up for it, well, I don't want to be round to hear 'em jawring and complaining about it. Still they 've got their good quallitys that you can't help respecting them for. But if there 's birds that we all etarnally abomunate and dispise and can't see one decent thing in 'em its crows. We hate 'em so that we 've give 'em the name of our little mother-in-laws of the air. Confound the black pests! They 've woke me up at an unearthly hour more times than I can count."

"They never disturb you without caws, do they?" inquired Ed.

"Yes, asinging the crowmattic scale more often than not. The etarnal black things is hated by the other birds, too. In fack the color line is drawn very closely among birds, I have observed."

But you like the *good* birds, don't you, Mr. Blittery," says Gussy.

" Bless you, yes! We get mighty attached to the little critters living close among 'em as we do, and speciel freindships among fethered and fetherless bypeds is not uncommon.

" I had a nintymit freind along the first of the spring, a little ren that had a nest in a big spruce down in the South Meader. She used to come and perch on my shoalder and even let me lend a hand in bilding her nest. My! Want we three — counting in the father-bird — mighty proud of that fambly when they hached out! "

Poly paused. " Go on! go on! " crys the children. " Tell us about her."

" I can't youngsters, and that 's a fack. She aint aliving now. One day I come along and caught a swede, a great, strapping feller bigger than what I be, aiming his gun at her. He did n't know much English and made out afterwards he did n't sense the jesters I was

amaking at him. Tip wan't afraid of him. She was asetting there proud and contented as could be in her nest looking out awfull confideing at him with her bright little eye. He shot her dead."

Poly pushed the doughnut plait clumsyly away from him thogh there was two left in it. Then he went on:

"I hunted round on the ground till I found her — nothing but a little bunch o' brown fethers down in the grass.

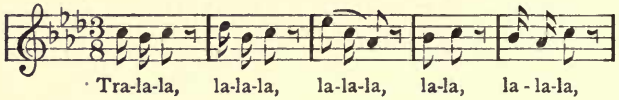
"And while I held that teeny thing very gentle in one hand, I jestickerlated with the other what I thoght of sech a deed. And I jestickerlated with sech good effeck that that swede aint got out of the hospittle yet.

"But that don't bring Tip back. There 's jest so much less music in the world now. Me and the father-bird had to bring the young ones up by hand seeing they 'd lost their mother. O I can't talk about Tip. I vow I can't."

Gussy rubbed a grimey hand acrost his eyes leaving a dirty smooch. Sis — even incredulating little Sis — carefully wiped away a tear. Ed did n't say nothing. I guess somehow they all felt *Tip* was true.

Urged to tell another story and encurraged by the deap effecks this one had produced he begun again:

" A chum of mine was atelling me the other day of an awfull interesting experiance he 'd had a little ways back with a flock of robbins — jest plain ordinnerry robbins to the best of his gnolledge and abillity and probbly not doing much out of the common, only sech actions not having come under his observence before he kind of took note of it. He was having a knap under a cupple of big ellums in Hookey's pasture when he was awoke by some unfamiller bird-sounds. First he declared to himself they was robbins. Then they wan't robbins. Then they was. Then again they wan't nothing of the kind. Finelly when he was fully awake he lissened very intentually

and found while it *was* robbins they wan't asinging the regglar robbin song. You know what that song is well enough.

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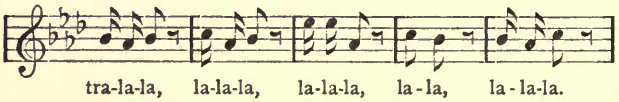

Any way that was what appeared to be attempted over and over again but it was plain they could n't quite strike the A clear and true. A cupple of 'em flatted like the diggins. Others done some better but you could see they wan't any of 'em compleatly sattisfyed with the effortes they was amaking. He walked slowly along wondaring why they was abothering to practice a new song (while seaking a turnup or cabbidge pach for a little light refreshment) when the old song had give sech excellent sattisfaction ever since the world

begun. At last he found himself in front of the old log fence at the end of the pasture.

"Then he knew!"

Poly stopped right here same as he always does when he gets to them exciting climacks of his storys.

"Knew *what?*" demanded Bub who was agazeing up open-mouthed into his face.

"I declare," says Poly, "that what follered in Hime's story (my chum's name is Hime) is so very remarkable in many of its particklers that I should be inclined to dought it did I not know how close to nacher Hime lives and taking in things every day that 's never seen by more worldly eyes and ears."

"Referring to the turnups?" inquired Ed.

"Referring," returns Poly, "to eyes and ears that aint dum and blind to everything but money-getting."

"O what was it he knew when he got to the fence? What *was* it, Mr. Blittery?" yelled all the little boys most to once.

"Knew what it was them little birds was

atrying to sing. Here, Gussy. Got my pencil? There! the back of this hand-bill will do to show you what he saw. It 's jest a plain, ordinnerry old log fence like this:" drawing away very carefull with the pencil stub his tung stuck out and afollering the motions of his hand same as it always does. "Jest a plain ordinnerry log fence" (still adrawing with tung and hand) "but on it was half a dozen hats, men's and women's, and a vail or 2 left there by some young folks that was aplaying golf in the next feild and had been stuck between the rails. They looked like this.

"So *that* was the music them little birds off there in the ellums was atrying with all their might to sing. He could hear 'em yet doing a little better one time and making a compleat failure the next but never sounding very bad

on account of even a robbin's failure being musickle. He 's an awfull good-hearted feller, Hime is, and he wondered if he could n't do something to help 'em out. All to once it come to him that he could."

"How 'd he do it?" screamed the boy-koruss.

"Why, no sooner did the thought strike him than he rushed up to the fence, seazed the hats and vails, quickly changing them to a lower place, thus transposing the strain into B flat.

"O the flud of mellerdy that filled that pasture then! First a few tentitive cherps then they sung it all through loud and clear and free!

"Hime says if he lives to hear the angels sing it wont be nothing but a flea-bite compaired to that music. A hat (the A) fell to the ground. He hasened to replace it fearing to hear cease that wondarful mellerdy. While his whole soul was absorbed in the ack of doing this he skurcely felt a kick applyed

to him from the rear. It prooved to be the owner of the hat that had come up unobserved and saw Hime with it in his hand.

" Explanations was useless. The new comer was a mattar-of-fack young feller in the rubber bussiness and his ears not attooned to celesti-

able harmonys. He fermly refused to give creadents to the staitment that when he caught Hime with his hat in his hand he was simply transposing some music for the birds to sing.

" I don't know as we 'd ought to blame him either. As I say, the story is a remarkable one in many ways and I aint sure I would give it full creadents myself if it wan't

that Hime wan't seen setting down nowhere for quite a spell afterwards but et his vittles astanding and aleaning against a tree. Of course no reasonable person that was famillier with Hime's easy ways would want any better confermation than that."

Later.

Jim tells me that bill did n't pass after all up to Augusty but there was so much said about the speach of Cess's that everybody thought it had become a law and he says it 's jest as well that the folks here is aprotecting the Mayflower whether them men in the legislater voted for or against it. He says he don't see why it is that a law thundered from Mount Sinai don't have so much effeck as them passed up to Augusty but thinks the cash fines might throw some light on it.

CHICTOOSET, May 27.

POLY BLITTERY come in again to-night about supper-time and he was in a state of mind. As it was the first state of mind we 'd ever seen him in everybody but me thinks he was putting it on, and that story he told was nothing but jest one of his yarns. Ed says if I did n't encurrage him by believing his every word his invention would never rise to sech eppick heighths. But the fack is I dont understand very well about his invention. I know it 's something about a plow that makes it easyer for the horses and that 's all I know. He says if he can get them interested in it that is the most going to be benerfited by it the thing will go through.

Now according to his tell the horses will be the ones bennerfitted. So if that 's so he 's

got to convince them that this thing produces the greatest maxicum of labor by the smallest maxicum of exertion.

When I told Ed about it he says, "The poor critters' ears wont be long enough to take that all in, I fear."

But he was entertaining us ever at the table and told us a lot about the old timers that we inquired about. One of them was Bottley Cowlinger, so called alwers because he was addictuated to intemperance. "I spose he went to the dogs long ago," says Jim.

"No," says Poly, "he did n't."

"*Did n't?*"

"No," says Poly, "although it looked for a considdable spell as though he would, and I guess he would if something had n't happened."

"What happened?"

"Why, the dogs riz up in protest."

Then he asked us if we 'd ever heard about Bottley's bet with Deacon Potter. Course we knew that was one of his little yarns be-

cause we was sure the deacon would n't ever bet but Mame told him to tell it jest the same.

" Well, the deacon kep the licker agency and 't was pretty hard for him to tell if the licker he let folks have was for ackchual sickness or intemperate purposes but there was one man he alwers knew enough to refuse and that was Bottley. When he applyed for it and said his wife was took with asmy and required it like all possessed he 'd give him a little sermon instead and said if he kep on he 'd fill a drunkard's grave.

" Well, on one occasion Bottley offered to bet with him he would n't.

" The deacon had n't ever bet in his life but he thought this would be a means of straightening Bottley up for Bottley hated to lose a bet so he put up the money.

" Well," says Jim, " Bottley lost that bet all right. I know what his end was."

" No, he did n't. He left the request to have his grave dug a couple o' feet too wide

for him. And his widder collected the money."

Well, I was agoing to tell what his state of mind was about. He et hearty of everything on the table, complimenting very highly the dandy Jims that Mandy had made for the children and eating 3 of them with everdent relish but it seamed to me his chearfullness, if not his appetite was foarced. Ed has been reading "Undine" to me and him acting like he did called it to mind — as if his soul had to do a sudden start, as you might say, to grow.

After supper he told us he had a subjeck of a very deliket nature to talk over with us and he was seaking our freindly counsell. So after the young ones was put abed we asked him what it was. But Mame says she took notice when he set down that he was n't too much took up with his trouble (whatever it was) to forget to put his best foot foremost as usual — that is, the one with the patient leather shoe on it (one that Andy the cobbler 'd

give him that had n't been called for). The other was carefully curled up under his chair.

"Yes, I find myself at this junction in a very deliket position," he began kind of embarrassed (Ed says he did that part really very well) and absent-mindedly fingering the large safety-pin that held his westcoat together — "that of being looked upon as the suiter of a refined and virtuous lady of means by that lady herself and not having any sech intentions in mind. I come to you the playmates of my childhood and friends of my riper years to assist in excritating me from the false position." And he hove a sigh so long that it seams as if his body that always looked so much like a balloon must collapse after losing so much air.

"Why don't you tell her out and out that you aint any sech idea?" put in Mame.

"Oh!" says he with another sigh, the mate to the one that had come before, "How little you know the lady when you say that! Aint I told her over and over again that I aint any

sech idea and dont it make no difference at all! She thinks it is humility on my part not darsting to look so high as her though madly wishing to. To make a long story short — "

"No, No! " says Mame, "Don't make it short. Don't leave out one single word of your story! "

"You flatter me," he says alaying his hand on his heart. "Well, then, to-day along about 12 I was agoing along the county road and I smelt a boiled dinner somewheres. Further progress settled it down on a house that for the present shall be nameless. I had some choke-cherry blossoms I 'd pulled offen a tree as I 'd went along and now it come to me that ladies like spring blooms and so I stoped and gnocked and give 'm to the lady of the house when she come to the door. But I vow I wan't in anyways prepared for the pleasure with which she recieved my moddest gif.

" 'Napoleon,' she says, 'you have fetched the spring to me and it has entered my heart.

Your very face is the sunshine of the spring with its glow of color and happyness — and — and it's promise,' she added kind of shy. 'This,' she went on, as I follered her into the house and she set an easy chair for me by the kichen winder, 'is a beautiful attention you have paid to me but it aint the first. Recolleck, Napoleon, the time you drove our Hannah, the cow, out of the turnup and cabbage field for me? And how you brought her to me completely subjugated and wearing a calm smile as if there had n't anything happened out of the common run?'

"'Well, there *had n't*,' I says.

"'Had n't! and that cow the terror of all the country round. That 's jest like you to belittle the deeds you 're always adoing for folks. Now I 'd like to know how many people's chimblys you 've notified 'em was aburning out and how many little children you 've rescued from drownding and how many poor young boys that has took a little too much down to Si Plunkett's that you 've quietly

led home after dark to spair their mother's shame? O, I know you.'

"All the time she was asetting the table and I took notice with considdable interest that she was asetting it for two. Then she went on to say that if I did n't have nothing else on hand I must stay and have dinner with her. 'Here the cow and the turnups and the cabbages are together again in a boiled dinner and here 's you and me. What more fitting than that we should set down together at the feast they make?'

"If that dinner did n't taste good! The piece of resistance, the redoubtable Hannah was even as corned beef much as you would expect. But the cabbage and the turnups! O there aint no words in any language to describe them! Then there was fresh gingerbread and head cheese and honey in the comb enough for an army — or me. I looked acrost at my hostess and thought how she 'd improved since Dianthy and Elviator had been at rest or rather since they 'd left her so."

" Then it was Loretty Maria! " cries Mame; " for pity's sakes! "

" Yes, it was Loretty Maria, as fine a woman as there is anywhere about and not looking a day over 55 — but unfortunately not looking a day under it."

He sighed again. And it seemed as if this last one must leave him ashrivelled up like a raison so much of him appeared to go out in it.

" I am surprised," says Ed, " at your applying this terrestial name to your leading lady. I fancied your experience might be the outcome of your recent submarine experiance which was so interesting — that some mermaid — "

" No, Loretty Maria 's no mermaid. Would that she were! Would that at this moment she was desporting herself like a veritable mermaid at the bottom of the sea! I think I could coap with mermaids or even, for the matter of that, sirens. I find that I distinckly cannot coap with Loretty Maria."

Another pause during which he looked so

beaten and helpless and out of wind generally that it seamed almost cruel for Jim to say, "Go on with your story."

"Well, along the first of it our conversation run along on safe ground — my adventures in Australia and South Africa — she was clearly pleased and interested when I told her in Australia I'd had a goverment position. She remembered about me studying medisin and she asked if my position was along the line of my medical practice.

"'Indireckly,' I replied, 'as it was the removing of superfluous hares.'

"And that reminds me of something that happened while I was eating a piece of pie that I ought to be ashamed of."

"Of the pie?" from Mame.

"No," gravely, "of my lack of confidence in the maker of it. You know how it had alwers been the boast of Dianthy and Elviator that they did n't ever allow themselves to get out of mince pie in their house summer or winter, year in and year out. Well, of course

Loretty Maria would be akeeping right along in that rut same as in every other — with one notable exception " (here the look of misery settled down again on his rosy face, that soon shone out again from it, however, as clouds are scattered by the sun) " and so I wan't surprised when she riz up and proceading to the oven door took out the finest looking and smelling mince pie that I 'd ever set eyes on with a towel, hot and rich and spicy, though mince pies is mighty uncommon at this season of year. She cut off a quarter of it and passed it over to me, fat raisons abusting out at the aiges and the aromy fairly intoxicating me. I took one lucious mouthful. But I did n't take another.

" If any of you have ever by any mischance got a hair in your mouth with your vittles you will understand my unpleasant predicament. All my effortes to gently excritate it from my teeth with my tongue and swaller it resulted in its twisting and atwisting itself back and forth over them till I felt sure

they must look like a harp of a thousand strings.

"I felt that gallantry toward my hostess forbade me mortifying her by removing it with my fingers and as she kep her eye fixed firmly on me waiting for my encomians on her pie, no opportunity came to do it unobserved. It came to me that maybe she 'd got aholt of the wrong receipt and had used the old rule for rabbit stew that says, 'First catch your hair.' Finally I got it down but the idea and the sensation was far from pleasant."

"You spoke of some honey on the table," put in Ed. "Did you think to swaller the comb after it?"

"What! And imply an insult to my hostess's hair? I did not. She looked awfull hurt because I did n't eat no more pie but it wan't till she clared away and was awashing up the dishes and I was asetting by the winder asmoking my pipe that she says, with the hurt look still in the eye she turned toward me, the other firmly fixed on the dish-pan (there never

was concerted action, as you might say, between them two eyes of Loretty Maria's).

"'Napoleon, why did n't you like my pie?'

"'Like your pie, Loretty Maria? Why I *did* like it. That pie was more than perfect' — which was true. It was surely perfect before its hirsute ingredient was added.

"'Then why did n't you eat it?'

"'Loretty Maria,' I says, 'don't you know my capacity is limmited?'"

"And did n't she know it?" inquired Jim who was awhittling out a willer whistle for Gussy but giving full ear to the story.

"'That my capacity is limmited and I 'd partook so hearty of Hannah and the vegetables that there my effortes had to cease?'

"'Oh!' she breathes with immense relief. 'I 'm glad 't was on *that* account. I was scairt you did n't like the rubarb flaver in it.'

"'Rubarb?' I says. 'Rubarb in mince pie?'

"'Yes. Course there 's no fresh apples this time o' year and it hapens jest now that there

aint a dryed apple in town either and so as Si said he would n't have any in for a couple o' days I done best I could and put in rubarb in room of 'em. I could n't sense its presence myself but I thought maybe you had and found it unpleasant. The only disadvantage to me was it was kind of stringy in places."

"'Loretty Maria!' I exclaimed. 'Have you hove out that piece o' pie?'

"'No, I aint,' she says, 'and here it is,' fetching it from the cubbard, 'if you feel ekel to it now.'

"'Ekel to it! Ekel to that piece o' pie! No, I aint and I dont know any human being that is. They 're all inferior to it, in my opinion.'

"And without another word I fell to and et that slice o' nectar and she would n't rest till I 'd et another quarter on top of it. And if it had been rubarber than what it was it would n't have spoilt it for me.

"But," he continnered in a different tone, "I guess it 's true that you have to pay some-

how for everything you get in this life — if it aint in cash it 's in something else. As I did n't pay for that dinner in cash I 'm apaying for it in something else."

" Indigestion? " I says.

" Indigestion!" with contemp. "No. Would that it was a trifle like that! Loretty Maria is bound to marry me! That 's what it is. And that 's how I 'm apaying for that dinner."

" There, there," says Jim. " You had ought to be careful about using ladies' names like that." He had finished the whistle and was blowing experimental toots on it so Poly had to raise his voice a little to be heard above it.

" Me using her name! Don't she propose to use mine all the rest of her life, I 'd like to know? "

" We cannot blame her," says Ed, " since it is a striking name. And may I ask this conundrum relating to it? " wishing, as he said afterward, to introduce a lighter note into the conversation and thus releave the strain of it.

"Why is it peculiarly fitting that this gentleman should bear the name of *Blittery?*"

No one could think of a good answer, so we all had to give it up.

"Because it was his father's," says Ed.

"Admirable," returned Poly, "admirable not only in its form but in its deeper meaning. Well, perhaps the pie had gone to my head. Anyway I says, 'Loretty Maria, anybody that can get up a chief doover like this had ought to get married. Folks says you 'd been married long ago if you was n't so put upon and kep under by Dianthy and Elviator. Now they 're gone, there 's no reason why you should n't brisk up and enjoy yourself.'

"'Aint I too old to brisk up now, Napoleon? Aint my chanst come too late?'

"I looked into the thin little face that was astanding still now and alooking at me so wistful. All over it was wrote in little fine lines her spoken words *too late.* Inside I was mad with Dianthy and Elviator on account of 'em not stepping out before and giving her

her chanst in time. But I says (I could say no less), 'Too late, Loretty Maria! What are you talking about? Why, you 're jest at an interesting age to my mind. You 're passed the age where you 'd make mistakes and you 've been kep under so long by them female Bluebeards that you 'll prize your liberty all the more. Loretty Maria, you 've been interested in hearing about my travells. Why don't you take a little trip somewhere yourself jest as a starter? Jest to try your wings, as you might say'?

"Loretty Maria take a trip!" exclaimed Jim. "You might as well expect the big oak on Plunkett's Hill to pack it's trunk and to go atravelling. I know for a fack that the only time Loretty Maria's ever took a trip out of this town was when she rode over that winter to the funerell of her uncle in South Buxton that left her the 500$ and froze both of her ears."

"That 's what she said — she had n't ever been out of Chictooset but once and she did n't

spose she 'd ever have the courage to start out alone. She did n't say nothing about freezing her ears but I should n't wonder if she had 'em in mind when she spoke of alwers wanting to travell in tropickle climbs.

" ' Oh ! ' she says, kind of frightened at the idea. ' Oh ! I could n't ever start out all alone. What would Dianthy and Elviator say? O I could n't.'

" ' No need to start out all alone, Loretty Maria,' I says chearfully. ' Hitch up along with somebody else. Anybody 'd feel lucky enough to get aholt of sech good company 's you.'

" ' They aint anybody to hitch up along with,' she says, ' as I know of.'

" ' They aint? I guess they is and not far away either that would like to hitch up along with yer if they was give encurragement to.'

" She 'd set down but at this she riz up and come over to me, the dish-cloth in her hand.

" ' Do you mean that, Napoleon? ' she says. ' Is that what you 've been adriving at all

along? How long, Napoleon,' she says, 'have you been acarrying my imege in your bosom, not darsting to speak out your mind?'"

Poly stopped and looked round at us all. The sweat was astanding on his forred, and he drawed the sleave of his coat acrost it.

"That 's the false position," he says, "that I 'm into."

Later.

Well, when Jim asked Poly how he lotted on us ahelping him out he said what he wanted us to do was to wait upon Loretty Maria and tell her what a low-down, mizzable critter he was and not worthy to tie her shoe if we could get it into the conversation.

"I 've told her that myself," he says, "and she thought it was all moddesty on my part and reproached me for my self-deprecation, follered by encurraging me by saying I was a night-errant that gave myself frealy to humanity with never a thought of pay and that was what kep me poor — representing vollunterry

povarty in the best and highest sense. 'With a wife of mature age at your side,' she says, 'to impart insperration and a fortune that releaves your mind of many of the material things there is no heighth to which you can't attaign. You shall not feal so unworthy of me, Napoleon.'

"So I had to give up," says Poly, "trying to make her believe I meant what I said. At sech times when words are so mixing and defeat your every purpose I wish the day had come that the sickologers predictuate when thought can be read direck and all you 'll have to do will be to take the lid offen a person's mind and look into it seeing for yourself what 's there. I would have give all I aint got if at that moment I could have took off the lid of my mind and give Loretty Maria one good look inside. It would put a sudden end to this onpleasant misunderstanding."

But I for one would n't want my mind treated as you would a sugar-bowl and I said so. I guess there aint anybody but what has

got some little corner they don't want the whole world to see and I 'd rather depend on words, unsattisfactory as they be, for a spell longer.

" Jennie," says Ed, " *your* mind would be a sugar-bowl but there 's lots of vinnegar jugs, too. But what dark and terrible secret are you ahiding from the world, dear? "

Well, Poly asked if in the name of friendship we would perform this service for him and secure his liberty.

" Don't the Bible tell us," he inquired, " that we are entitled to life liberty and the pursoot of happiness? Now I aint asking for anything but jest one of the three — liberty. I 'd give up the other two for jest this and if the cry was ' Give me liberty or give me death,' I 'd say, ' I 'll take both of 'em if there aint no other way.'

" That 's how I feal at the present writing," he sighed weerily and drawed the other sleave acrost his forred. Mame nudged me how wet it was.

" Now Poly," says Jim kindly, " we believe

your yarn jest as much as we would if it was printed between yeller covers. What would you do if we was to go over to Loretty Maria's and do as you request?"

A radiant look overspread his feachers.

"Do? I 'd call down unnumbered blessings on your heads! When will you go?"

"To-night," says Mame promptly. "We was agoing to call there anyway before Jim went away and we 'll start this very minute. I hope it aint too late. I know Loretty Maria goes to bed with the hens."

"Me and Ed will go too," I says.

"No you wont," declared Mame. "I know you don't mean no harm by it, Jennie, but I believe that happy face of yours has done all the mischief — if there 's been any mischief done. I aint any doubt that it was the extattic expression you 've wore since you 've been Mrs. Spinney that put sech things into Loretty Maria's head — assooming that sech things is there. No, *you* aint the one to try to discurrage anybody from matrimony."

" And you are? " inquired Ed. " Is that the right inference? "

" Ed Spinney," she says, " you nead n't think you 've got all the felicity there is. I guess you aint the first man that was ever marryed."

" I could almost wish he was to be the last," wailed Poly. He was still perspiring freely but both sleaves being wet he surrepticiously used a scrap of cloth among Mame's cuttings on the table to wipe off his forred which he threw into the scrap-basket.

Jim got up and went to looking for his hat. That would give Poly time to back down, he thought, because it always takes considdable time to find that hat. But even after Mandy had fished it out from under the sofy where the baby 'd poked it and brushed it off and handed it to him, even then Poly was still awearing that pleased expectorating look.

" Give it to me good and hard," he says. " Tell her that you guess that p'raps on God's great earth there aint a critter that 's so gen-'elly low-down and good-for-nothing as what

I be — that I 'm a cuss to the commoonity and a warning to youth and if any stronger language than that comes to yer, use it. Use it freely.

" And I guess," he added humbly, " that you wont be saying nothing but the truth. I guess you wont be lying, Jim, if you say it all."

Jim held out his hand to him. " Poly," he says, " I aint a doubt that you 're trying to play a trick on us but I 'll say this for you. I 'll say that the words you put into Loretty Maria's mouth (and they sound jest exackly like her — that 's where your genius comes in) was more than half true. You aint ever got nothing to give to folks but you 're always willing to give yourself."

" But that 's the spirit I 'm objecting to in Loretty Maria! I wish her charraty stopped short of it. Good-night and God speed you both on this friendly mission." Then after they 'd gone he opened the door and hollered after 'em, " Tell her I 'm a piret and a fugertive from jestice! Tell her — "

But they was out of hearing by this time and he came back for his scrap of a hat.

"Mr. Blittery," say Ed, "I 'm surprised that in this difficulty as in so many others in which you have found yourself at various periods, that you don't light out. Jest absent yourself from town for a year or so without leaving any address and this matter will right itself. Your flight would convince Miss — (has she a surname?) of the sincerity of your words when you say it is not your wish to wed her."

Yes, she 's got a surname but I guess everybody 's forgot it now. I know I have. Them girls has alwers went by their first names and their father was jest "Savin Silas" before 'em. But about lighting out I 'd have done that the minute she began to talk if there wan't a pressing business matter that keeps me here. To go away jest now would jeppardize serious business interests of mine."

Ed laughed. "Now look here," he says. "You 've strained our credoolity to the snap-

ping-point with your love-tale but a story about business snaps it."

"It don't with Jennie. I know she believes me."

"Yes," I says, "and I'd do anything I could to help you. I know you'd be as honest in business as you would be in love."

He thanked me and went away. I pity him. And I believe every single word he told us was true.

CHICTOOSET May 28

CLOUDY with every appearance of a storm. But perhaps it wont after all. Perhaps it will turn out to be a nice day same as yesterday, although there 's considdable cobwebs on the grass and round. We been looking forred to a nice rainy day. A rainy day in the country is jest beautifull I think and we aint had a reel out and out one since we come. There 's lots of beautiful things we been planning for the first rainy day.

Jim and Mame has been telling us how they carryed out Poly Blittery's plan last night. Loretty Maria was awful pleased to see them when they went in. They did n't get there any too soon as she 'd jest opened the door and was aputing out the cat when they was about to gnock on it. She told them all about the funerells and their last words and everything,

and took them into the pantry and showed them all her jars of jellys and preserves and pickles that her and Dianthy and Elviator had put up in the fall. Mame says they made an awfull handsome sight, rows and rows of the different colors of stuff, red and green and yaller and perple in the shining jars along the pantry shelves. Jim says it looked pretty to him most as any flower garden. She had took up a basket and as they talked she was selecting several jars to send to me for a wedding present and he says it was jest like a freind taking you into their garden and picking a bright flower for you here and there. The three sisters had a secret about putting them up and keeping all the natural colors that they would n't tell to a living soul. It is said that Loretty Maria was quite well along before they 'd ever trust it to her and they say that that was one reason she was kep down to sech an excess by them fearing she 'd let it out irreverently if she was out among folks much.

When she handed the basket to Mame (it

was too preshus to be trusted to a man) she spoke of my marriage and said she understood that my husband was interested in me quite a spell before I 'd sensed it. And when Mame said that was so she said that it was more than likely that there was lots of jest sech cases if the truth was known where all the man neaded was a little encurragement owing to the lady being in some ways above him and if it wan't given two (2) lives would be shattered and blarsted.

" Under sech circumstances, Mary," she asked, " what would you say, speaking in a general way, to the lady giving him a glimpse of her own heart if it could be done consistant with maidenly dignity? "

Mame says you could have gnocked her over with a pin-feather. Her and Jim had been aplanning how to lead up to Poly's subjeck (though they didn't believe a word of his story) and here was Loretty Maria appayrently leading up to it herself. Mame felt it was a top-pick that required very deliket handling and she was turning round in her mind the best way to

answer when Jim blarted out, remembering his promise,

"I see that low-down mizzable miscrint of a Poly Blittery's ahanging round here this summer. I guess —"

But he did n't get no further. Meek little Loretty Maria riz up, her face and eyes ablazing so she looked 20 years younger, Mame says, and she cries out, 'Not another word, James Allen! Poly Blittery 's my advianced husband."

Jim said the first thought that come to him was that Poly's alphabetical eals was reel then after all. Their capers could n't be more wonderful than a woman like Loretty Maria making sech a fool of herself.

There was a silence. Then Jim says, "Are you sure of this, Loretty Maria? It seems like a strange story to me. Have you had it from good authority? And has it come to Poly's ears himself?"

Then there follered a long talk in which Loretty Maria opened up her mind.

"You know as well as me, Mary Babcock,"

she says, (she alwers forgot to give Mame her married name) that I 've been put upon all my life, though I aint ever owned up to it myself before this minute. I aint ever known what it was to see anything but hateful snarly faces to the table or anywheres else around me in the house. I want ever good-looking, I guess, but once I was young and I never had the things that belonged to youth. I never had a beaux. I aint even got the memory of one that begun to shine around me a little spec and then got tired of me and marryed somebody else. I aint got nothing at all, not even a disappointment — nothing, that is, excep a little bunch o' meader rue that Poly Blittery fetched me one morning a couple of years ago and left on the shed steps and that 's in my Bible now.

" I expect you 'll call me foolish but I 've alwers had a dream of a lover that would gneel at my feet and says, ' Have pitty on me, Loretty Maria! Have pitty on one that cannot live without you! '

" It begun when I was a little spec of a girl

"I've always had a dream of a lover that would gneel at my feet and says, 'Have pitty on me, Loretty Maria!'"

and it got to be a habit with me to keep that dream in my mind — only the lover kep agetting a little older all the time."

" Well, he 'd ought to be somewheres round 60 by this time," says Mame, " according to."

" That 's jest the differculty. He aint and I can't make him so. At 60 he could n't get down, he 'd be so stiff in the joints. I try and try but you can't controal your dreams. I can't make my dream lover a day over 35. I 've tryed to put a few gray streaks in his hair jest to make him more suitable, but I can't even do that."

By this time Jim had gone out into the kitchen for a smoke and to hear the Poll-Parrot talk. He says he could n't stand sech foolishness as was agoing on in that settin-room.

" Well, " says Mame soothingly, " I dont know 's there 's any harm in having your dream lover, as you call him (and I guess that 's as good a name as any) jest exackly as you want him. Nobody but yourself would ever know the differance. But Loretty Maria, it aint in your mind, is it, to do a ridicklous thing in actuel

fack?" Then she told her how useless it would be to expeck any one like Poly to settle down after he 'd been leading sech a wandering life.

"I don't *want* him to settle down. I don't want to stay settled down myself. I want to take a lot of trips into tropickle climbs, and sech places, where he 's been. I 've got the means. Mary, I was born 55 years ago but I aint but 16 in reality, I aint ever reely lived."

Mame says perhaps she had n't but she looked at Loretty Maria's face and thought of what Ed said once, that Time is the best of acters. Never under any conditions does he forget his lines.

"Then how' you 'd worry about him when he made one of his disapearances that he 's subjeck to. One day he 'd be here and the next day he would n't and you not having the remotest idea where in creation he 's went to."

"But I want to have something to worry about. Dianthy and Elviator alwers done my worrying for me — I did n't have the privelege of doing even that for myself. Then he needs a wife to fix him up. I don't know when any-

thing has went to my heart like that old brass-safety-pin that was aholding his west-coat together last time he was here — and me with a whole coffee-can full of men's buttens up in the cubbard that was Father's."

"Oh!" says Mame the wise, "that feeling aint wifiness, that 's motherlyness. Why did n't you offer to sew some buttens on his westcoat for him?"

"I — I did n't think it would be quite — deliket," she says.

"Come, Jim," calls Mame then, "I 'm agoing home." And to Loretty Maria, "Goodnight, I wont say nothing more now, Loretty Maria, because I know you 'll think better of this when you come to."

I 've thought of a splendid plan. One that will releace Poly and make Loretty Maria happy, too.

I 'm awful surprised she did n't know there was somebody admiring her in the past.

CHICTOOSET, May 29.

WE have all been down to the boat to see Jim off for home as his vacation will be up tomorrer. We are agoing to feel pretty lonesome without him. I 'm glad Ed is in the insurance busines so he can make this his headquarters while he goes off on his trips. He 's a getting in quite a little business right round here.

The two little fresh-air boys is acoming tomorrer and our little boys can't hardly wait till they get here. They are going to give them a beautiful time. Sis is alaying plans, too. She has got a place riged up in the barn chamber jest like a school with a row of boxes to set down on and she says she is agoing to learn them about plants and about how the bees go south in the winter and how the bears hyphenate in cold weather and all sech things. And she has got self-made maps all round on

the walls. When Jim saw them he says "Well, the earth do move." She had got various islands and capes about a thousand miles from where they was when he went to school.

Me and Mame and Mandy is making up quite a stack of bread and doughnuts and pies and boiling a lot of hulled corn. Hulled corn is the most nurrishing thing there is for the expense but it 's quite a lot of work and Ed is building a trapeze.

Later.

Poly blittery has disappeared. Nobody knows where to. Ed said, "How about that important buisness mattar that was akeeping him here? I expeck that has been brought sudden to a final issue."

He was aspeaking jocosively but it 's turned out there was sech a mattar after all. When Cess Perkins examined that contraption he 'd made for a plow he said it wan't probably worth nothing but seeing Poly was an old freind and

feller-townsman and appearantly hard-up he 'd give him 50$ for it, Poly releasing himself from what rights there was in it. But Poly stood out for a hundred enthasizing what a long lenth of time he 'd been his freind and feller-townsman and how partickler hard up he was at the pressent moment but Cess stood ferm at 50$. That 's what Poly was awaiting for, to see if he could n't get the 100$.

Well, nobody 's seen him since 4 o'clock this afternoon when Cess met him in the road and offared to compromize on 75$ and Poly took it excep the little Ackley boy from the poor farm that met him agoing up the South Buxton road and he give him (the little Ackley boy) a silver half-a-dollar.

There 's jest a few of us that can conjecturate why Poly did n't stand out longer for the rest of the hundred $. And Ed says he *has* paid in cash after all for the boiled dinner up to Loretty Maria's. It stands him in jest twenty five $ (25$) a princely sum to a Chictooseter and no mistake.

" Poly 's an Esau — was born an Esau. The world is full of Jacobs and Esaus, the Esaus being in the majorrity by a good deal. They are hungry most of the time and want their pottage right away — *hot.* There 's a lot of Jacobs who have been agetting ready for jest sech opportoonitys. They are willing to wait. They have n't et their pottage as fast as it was made but have some laid by — or the where-withal to buy it.

Them like John D. Rockyfeller or Cess Perkins that can resist temptation and are willing to postpone getting the things they want gradooally accummulate the world's wealth.

Esaus work for them.

Mame says anyboddy that can talk like Ed can when he 's in earnest (which is few and far between) had ought to be sent to the legislater. And Jim says there 's nearer and securer places than that if so be we reely want to get rid of him.

CHICTOOSET, May 30.

THE little-fresh-air boys has come and pan ammonia raigns supream in the shed chamber where our boys is astarting in to entertain them. I guess probbly I can't write much in the Diary while they 're here on account of the extry work, but if there 's any little cracks or crevisses of time presenting themselves they will be joyfully applyed to the Diary.

CHICTOOSET, Sunday June 2.

BEAUTIFUL day.

I don't know why a June Sabbath can be so much lovelier than a June Tuesday or a June Friday. But sech is the case as we all realize. When we was awalking home from church Mame was alooking up at the deliket light colored foalitage on the trees and she says to Mrs. Hammond that was awalking alongside of her, "We don't see such deliket and tender greens after June."

"No," says Mrs. Hammond, "it 's a fack that we don't. They aint fit to eat after that."

We 're all awriting to Jim to-day — children and all — so there aint no more time for the Diary now.

Sis has got hers wrote already and sealed up and tucked under the setting-room carpet so the boys won't get afoul of it. In it there 's one of them flat pin-balls that she 's made for

him, one side being a piece of her mother's best dress and the other, of her own pretty red one.

" I made it," she says, " of the very thinnest pasteboard I could find so it would n't take an extry stamp. So now I 've saved 2 cents towards coming to Chictooset next time."

" Two cents-ible for a child, I call it," says Ed. He likes the boys disposhens the best that takes as little heed to saving as to pin-balls.

CHICTOOSET, June 3.

TO-DAY, his face almost lost behind a big cloud of smoke from his precious pipe, came our old friend and Mother's, Capten Joe Silliker. I declare if it did n't seem jest like old times when we see his little wizened up figger asetting down by the kitchen winder jest where he used to set, when we was all children asmoking a big pipe and atalking, while I was making pies and Mame agetting things ready for the stew.

A nice little piece of veal had been fetched in by a good kind nabor that Mame chopped up to put in the stew. It was ruther a small piece for a big fambly like ours but we made lots of dumplings to put in and plenty of potaters and with a couple of my evacuated apple pies we had a splendid dinner. It done us all good to see the little fresh air boys pitch into it. We give them most of the meat part on

account of them exercising more than what we had out doors.

The Capten aint an interesting talker like Poly Blittery. He kind of yaps out little short sentences and don't never use no superflewous languge. First time Sis heard him in the nex room she thought he was a new record. Ed says he don't understand what we see in him. I guess it 's the past, much as anything, that we see in him, and all the plessant things he done for us when we was little. It 's like the two old seringa bushes corner of the back yard. One morning Ed was kind of claring things up outdoor and he comes in and says, " Them old bushes that 's about dead keeps the grass from agrowing green up in the corner. The boys is here to help and I guess I 'll take the opportoonity and get the ax and chop them up for firewood."

" The boys? " says Mandy, come into the room in time to hear the last words, aghast.

But me and Jim and Mandy says, " No, them bushes has got to die a nacherel death. While

they put forth a leaf or a blossom they should n't be cut down. We could see what Ed could n't see. We could see Jim's pile of books there, where he used to strech himself out and studdy on warm days, and the places where he hid his ball and his marbles and the box for his rabbits. We could see me and Mandy's doll-house, made of a soap box, with all the beautiful pieces of broken crockery in it and our rag dolls asetting up to the table. We could see Mother in her best bunnet on Sunday apicking the first blossoms to carry to the church. That 's what we saw when we looked at the homely old bushes and what Ed could n't see.

Same as Mandy says she can almost taste tamarinds and guavo jelly when she hears the capten's voice.

Ed says that what reel material the capten has gathered up in the way of experiances would do wonders if Poly's vivvifying fancy was brought to bear on it. But the capten aint got anything but facks. He can tell you jest what

the lattitude happened to be at the time he was wracked and jest how many fathoms from the shore it ockured. But if you 've only got facks and satisticks to contribbute to offer in conversation and no fancy you 're pretty dull company to most folks.

Well, he had more 'n common to say this morning atelling about a dream he had last night on account of eating some tripe that seemed so reel and acktual he could n't seem to throw it off.

He was agoing through that shipwrack again on the " Flying Judith " off the coast of Switzerland and was asetting on the deck (seeing he could n't stand on account of the vessel being on her beaming ends) and ahollering off orders to his men, " Man the fo'castle," he hollers, and " Cut the starboard astern! " when all to once she give another lurch and he was throwed over into the raging and boiling sea.

" I vow," he says, " if I did n't strike a block o' floating timber jest as plain and distink as

what I did in the acktual wrack all them years ago, so much so that Hi and Nate, Phebe's little boys, that sleeps with me was jest about scared out of their senses when they woke at the howl I give and they saw me alaying on the floor. I 'd struck on my chest and this mornin' I found a big dent in it and all the contents mixed up.

" Maybe," he says, " I wan't tickled to death to find out it was only one of the dreams that stuff is made of and I was snug in harber and alongside my own bed leastwise my small share of it.

" I aint ashamed to say that I got right down on my gnees and give thanks that sech was the case and that I wan't ever going off on no more v'yages — excep my last."

" Then you don't have no difficulty in getting down," I says, " to your morning and evening devastations do you? "

" None to speak of. I dont *flop* down same 's I did in my younger days. I kind of creak down gradooal, but I get down, and that 's the

main p'int. What makes you ask? You aint aselling no rheumatical medisen, be you?"

"No," I says. Then I inquired if he was ackchelly glad he wan't ever going on no more v'yages, and if he did n't ever feel no hankering for the sea same as most retired captens did, and long once more to unfold his opinions for one long fecituous flite over seas into troppicle climbs and he said he 'd be blowed if he ever did.

I guess I was kind of disappointed but I was pleased when he added, thoughtfully watching me rolling out my pie-crust with a maple serrup bottle (we could n't find the rolling-pin since the boys used it to roll one of their cars on) "Not but what I 'd like to make a trip by steam if it was so I could. I aint ever took a trip by steam."

"Maybe you will some time," I says.

"No, no," he answers, "it can't ever happen. But I kind of have a pipe-dream what it would be like same as you do whether the plannets or not is inhabited. It don't do no harm, as I

know of. I expeck the jiggly motion might make me sea-sick. But all the same twould n't be bad asetting on the deck without no responcerbility and ready for anything that might come up."

"Well now," I says, "that dream calls to mind one Loretty Maria 's had ever since she was an infant child almost and she was atelling about the other day." And then I told him about Loretty Maria's dream lover and about his stunt that he kep adoing. Then I says, "And that calls to my mind how we promised Loretty Maria a cup of yeast of this week's raising, and if it aint agoing to put you out I 'd take it very kindly if you 'd jest lug it along to her as you 're apassing her home."

The capten looked kind of took aback. After a minute he says, "I was acackleating to go home the lower road, but — Aint there none o' the boys round, Jennie, to take it up there?"

"Yes, they 'll go, Capten," I says, "if so be you don't wish to."

" No," he says, " I spose I 'll go, seeing it 's you that wants me to. But to tell you the truth, Jennie, I aint anxious to go to Loretty Maria's house. I recolleck letting out to you once that I was mighty interested in Loretty Maria before I took up with Judith and nobody knows what might have happened if it wan't for them she-dragons, Dianthy and Elviator, so that no one ever darsted to go near her. And I 've felt kindly towards her ever since. But Dianthy 's let me know at differant times that Loretty Maria 'd took a dislike to me and could n't abide me and what she done with a bunch o' meadder rue that I 'd left on the shed steps one Sunday morning jest for freindship."

" What did she say she done with it? " I says afacing round at him.

" Hove it into the fire as soon as she saw it."

" Capten," I says, " I 've got undying proof that that meadder rue is in her Bible now."

The capten's pipe fell from his lips to the floor and broke. He did n't notice it.

" Where 's yer yeast? " he says briskly. " I may 's well take it right along."

Later.

The woman that brought in the piece of meat was Mrs. Ellery Hammond, the particularest housekeeper there is in Chictooset, so everybody vows and declares. There aint a single thing ever out of place in her home and no smoking or mud-tracks to the slightest degree.

" I aint defending smoking nor mud-tracks," Mame says yesterday when we was talking about it after she 'd been in here and made her brags about sech things while she eyed our sticky door latches, " but I 've found by experiance that a judishous sprinkling of each helps to make a home. She, poor thing, with all her neatness aint got nothing but a house.

" But its a house all ashining," says Sis, who loves order to a degree, and is put to it to find new hiding places for her lead-pencil and her comb every day of her life, " and it must be beautiful to live in a house where everything is never

out of place. Mrs. Hammond always knows just where everything belonging to her is."

"Yes, excep her husband and boys," says Mame.

We think it was her severity that has drove her daughter Albuny to the other extremmity. She married a Swiss sailor that come here on the floating zephyr by the name of Egz. She hated like the worst poison ever was to call her little boy by her fambly name for a Christian name when he came along but her mother foarced her to the issew on account of the Hammonds being such a long and honorable line, and the child's father's first name (that Albuny wanted to give him) sounding so much like claring your throat. Well, I was agoing to say that Albuny is bringing up her child according to the new magazine method, not to foarce his little will, but let his little character develop natural and spontaneous so she says, and not warped and rigified by extraneous agencies sech as parents and gardeens that have no right to do so and should stand in awe and respect to the

child that has been given to them, and the neighbors say if there is a field-fence astanding or a poor old horse or cow left unmutilated or a tool able to be found down to the ship-yard after Hammond Egz's character self-forms itself its more than can be reasonably expected.

But in the face of all this yielding up to her boy Albuny says there 's one point she 'll be as decided about as the everlasting hills is, and that is that with the name he 's got foarced on him her boy shan't never (she says she aint laid her hand on the Bible but it amounts to that) shan't never (and she means it I guess) go into the restyrant business. It would make him ridicklous. But Mame says it don't make no odds what she calls him — he never comes. She says that when she (Albuny) blows a tin horn for him that she keeps a purpose ahanging behind the shed door for him to come and get in the night's wood she can't think of a thing (Mame can't) but the Scripcheral "I have piped unto you and you have not danced."

CHICTOOSET, June 4.

A GREAT to do in the naberhood to-day because Pete picked a little peice of minionet between Mrs. Hammond's fence and her acting like he 'd committed some fragrant crime. And last night at the supper-table Sam, the bigest one that 's doing the best he can (by spells) and is helping Pete to be good, too, saw him drinking his coko out of his saucer and says gently, " Remember, Pete, God sees you."

" Yes," ascented poor Pete remorsifully as he set the saucer down, " I spose that deed 's got up to Heaven by this time."

Ed says he don't see how they 're ever going to distinctuate between what 's wicked and what 's impolite. He says folks is as apt to show the same horrer at their bad grammer as if they swore. But as to ourselves in

regard to them we 're follering pretty close a verse from the Ladies Collum in the Chictooset Arrow that Sis read out loud to us the day before they come which is thus: " Never crittersize a gest that is under your roof that has pecooliararitys of dress, behavier, or views."

" Now! " says Sis. " Seeing them little boys is agoing to be our gests we all got to govern ourselves accordingly."

The Stubbs girl that hapened to be pressant grinned, but Sis, geting kind of red in the face, says, " It don't add ' unless they 're poor and homeless.' It says *any* gest."

So that rule is what we 're agoing by. Strange to say the one that it 's the hardest to go by it is Sis herself. No one else in the fambly is tryed to sech an excess, but she sticks to it valliantly in the face of all. Ed says it is very striking the way her few cherrished possessions work in for their stage-impropertys. But the worst was when they took her sash — the only one she 's ever had — after she 'd

ironed it very careful and left it to air behind the stove that she was agoing to wear out to supper. She reely had n't ought to have left it among the clean dish-towels for they hapened to be playing horse and took it to eak out the reins. Sis could n't help crying when she found her sash as she was geting ready to go out where it was left by Sam that was nothing now but a dirty string tied in between a peice of close line and a horse's halter, but even then she stuck to the Ladies' Collum and muttared no reproach. But at sech times I expeck the easyest part of the rule to keep is about not crittersizing their "views." I guess it don't make much odds to Sis what their views are, if any. A little later we saw Sis awending her way over to Alvesty Stubbs's, a box containing her few traysures that had so fur remained intack in her arms and she 's left it in Alvesty's care. Ed says it 's fortunet for Sis she has got no sence of umor while Alvesty has.

"Maybe," I says, "she 's got a common-sense of umor."

" There aint any sech a thing," says Ed. Take it all in all I don't think anybody can ever go very far wrong that follers the Ladies' Collum. Excep spots. I will say that we 've found it more dependable for etiquet than for spots or sech things as the care of canary birds. Mame tryed to remove one from her brown gingem a few years back by using a mixcher that it recommended and what did it do but set the color for all time. But we aint had any sech results in follering derections for genteel behavier and we feel that we can be gided by it unreservably in sech mattars. Mother alwers read it after she 'd finished the deaths.

Referring to that speshel rule Ed says he wonders if the fraze " under your roof " applys to gests that are desporting themselves on your ridge-pole same as these little boys has done more than once since they come. When I reminded him that the letter killeth, but he said he doubted it. He says he 's come to the conclusion that *nothing* does — if it 's boys.

As I look from the winder I see Mandy

working like all possessed diging worms for Pete. No mother that I ever saw done it more cheerfully and he requires a great number of worms, fishing as he does the heft of the time.

June 7.

We have got the most wonderful and splendid news about Poly Blittery that ever was.

I 've been looking back throgh the Diary and I find the last time I mentioned him was when he got 75$ from Cess Perkins for his invention and what a big sum of money it seemed.

Now comes the news (and it is well augmenticated on every hand, so we can believe it) that there is 75,000$ comeing to him for that same invention!!!

It appears that a long time ago Poly's moddel had been examined by a young lawyer feller named Groopy (relation to the Henburys) that has got a pretty long head and he discovered there was something in it. So he advised Poly to file a caveyat in the patient office in Washington to protect himself. But Poly told him he did n't want to bother about filing it, probly because he hated the sight of a tool of

any kind. But Mr. Groopy said so much that finelly Poly said *he* could do it for him and he would work on Mr. Groopy's wood-pile till his trouble and expenses was reimburced. So he done it and stuck valliantly to the wood pile till Mr. Groopy said he was sattisfied and then, he, being Poly, promply forgot all about the transaction. But when Cess applyed for the patient in Washington he run up against Poly's caveyat and found he did n't have no rights at all and had hove away his 75$! Then a man that is interrested in sech things heard about it and said he would give 75,000$ to the real inventer for the moddel and an assinement of rights. (It took Ed quite a spell to explain to me what this all meant and I don't know as I rightly understand it now.) The unplessant part of it is Poly can't be found anywhere. But a numbar of leading men here, headed by Jim and Ed is agoing to start right in to find him. We alone know why he don't come back to Chictooset. Jim has just wrote this off for the citty papers:

" N. B." (That means Napoleon Blittery)

" Safe for you to return and no questions popped. You will hear something to your advantageousness if you will write to J. S. A. or come and get it yourself.

P. S. A word to the Wise is Suffishant."

Concerning this last Mame says that being true why are they paying for 35 or 40? Not that she begrudges it. Ed says conversation through the press always does come high, that he knows of a man who had to pay 1000$ jest for one simple remark.

So Poly will see the notice and come back. How glad everybody is for him! And they all say he deserves every single cent of that splendid forchune!

CHICTOOSET, June 14.

THE little-fresh-air boys left to-day, and it seems as if ½ of the house was gone. When they come it went to our heart to see them so puny and white-livered, and as for Pete, the littlest one that 's got a great head on a poor little slip of a body, Sis said all she could think of when she saw him was an improper fraction. But I guess she was reminded of considdable other improper things before they left.

Her school and the bees ? Them boys had n't been here a half an hour after they 'd et their dinner that they was n't blacked up and having a minstrel show in the barn chamber and the only boys in town that was willing to pay a cent and be audiance was ockipying them primly placed soap and candle boxes that was afterwards split up for slats for their wild animal show.

They had a circus, they had a torpedow boat fight off of the shore and the 2 fresh-air boys stayed so long under water everybody thought they 'd drownded and now all the town boys is atrying to do the same thing.

Sam, the bigest one knew a way to get weighed in the slot machine down to the tavern without puting in his nickel and he done it every chance he got to see if he was againing. And he found he was. Ed says he was like the Arabs that silently stole a weigh. We did n't mind their other capers so much but this was the same as stealing and we talked to Sam considdable about it. He found he 'd gained 4 pounds in the 10 days, and seemed to feel renewed in every tuber of his body so he said when we asked him if he did n't and Pete too.

They had a splendid vissit and we can't be thankful enough that we could have them and that, as Ed says, we did n't have to send them back to the citty in sections.

They was awful well-meaning little boys.

Things that got mislaid while they was here

is being found gradooally. Hod Perkins came acrost our wash-board down in the meadder to-day & fetched it home.

We aint found the big shears yet but I guess they 'll come to light. It being sech slow work using the butten hole scizzars to cut out blouses with I hope they will.

JUNE 15.

POLY 's got his money — the 75,000$.

The little boys is ahollering Hurrah, hurrah! and its all us big folks can do to keep ahollering it with them. The whole town is rejoicing.

He ain't come back to Chictooset but he 's been found and it was all fixed up in Wappisangug throgh a lawyer and it 's in all the papers. I suppose I 'll jest have to *write* my HURRAH.

From the *Chictooset Arrow*, June 16.

"A VERY pretty home wedding occurred at the home of Loretty Maria Penhollow to Captain Joseph Silliker, Commander of the late and ill-fated barkentine, *The Flying Judith.*" (Seeing nobody was pressant at the wedding but Loretty and the Cappen and old Mrs. Newcome and Pamelia, Mame wonders what it was *made* it pretty.) "We understand that the happy pair started at once for tropical climes. We wish a long life of joy and happiness to the gallant Captain and his lovely bride.

"We take pleasure in appending a tender little poem written by the bride that was kindly handed in to us with a generous slice of the cake. We feel that this may well rank, in quaintness and simplicity of style, among the best efforts of the poet Wadsworth :

" Long, long he loved Eve's daughter
But darsted not to speak
And fain would he have sought her
Had he but *dared* to seek.

But when at last he wooed her
A-gneeling at her feet,
Like heathens worship Boodha,
She made his joy compleat."

There never was sech a time in Chictooset as what there was the evening they was married. All the men and boys in town and some of the girls, too, joined in the serranade with horns and tin pans and anything they could get aholt of. Then they had a band over from South Buxton and you never heard sech a racket in your life. They serrounded the house and kep a calling " The Bride! the Bride! We want to see the Bride! " So at length jest to get rid of them Loretty come and stood in the winder looking almost frightened to death, the Cappen beside her — and himself, too, almost.

She whispered to the Cappen as they stood there and he raised his hand as a signal he wanted to speak. As soon as the hubbub moderated down enough though there was still cries of " Speach! speach! " he says, after claring his throat a good many times.

" Me and my — Wife is — obliged to our — freinds and feller cittizzens for this — warm demminstrashen and she — her —" (here he was nudged by Loretty Maria) " and *we* want every — one of you to go down to Si Moseley's and get all the — siggars and apples and candy you wish according to your — ages and sexes and — "

" Preveous condishen of servitood " is what Ed *thinks* he wound up with (seeing there was half-adozen widdowers in the crowd) but there was sech a roar set up that minnet that no buddy really caught the finel end of that last sentance. The air was rent with " Three cheers for the Cappen and the Bride! Three cheers for the Cappen and the Bride! "

And they was give so loud and hearty that

I don't see if the wind was in the right direction how the folks up on Mars could help ahearing it. Then in less than 5 minnets the whole gang was acrowding round Si's to sech an excess that it was all him and his 2 brothers could do to wait on them and keep account.

Dear simple souls! Why could n't they look ahead and protect themselves from all this publissity (course I ain't talking about Si and the boys) by keaping their plans hid?

Of course there was lots that would n't let on they was supprised — sech folks never do. One woman (Mrs Jerry Piper out by the crick) said Loretty Maria and the Cappen had been keeping company kind of quiet — in fact had been virtuously engaged — for a number of years.

Them dashes I 've put in with the Cappen's speach don't reppresent a thing but the way he yaps out two or three words to a time and then stops, same as I 've spoke of before. Ed says the dashes is ambigutous but I want to say the Cappen aint a profain man and never was.

CHICTOOSET, June 17.

JEST beautifull to-day.

Ed and me are going to be alone all day. The rest of the folks have gone over to South Buxton to stay till to-morrer avissiting Mame's aunt Sophelia Atkins and Uncle Hiram that lives on a big farm and that 's been asending and asending for them. Our folks jest kep aputting it off till yesterday Uncle Hi sent over his horse and carryall for them to go over in by a young feller that was acoming here to see his girl. They got started this morning at five o'clock and I 'm glad they 've got sech lovely weather. Me and Ed was invited, too, but Ed could n't go on account of buisness and I seemed to feal as if I had n't ought to leave him.

" I 'm awfull sorry," says Mame awinking at Jim, " that you two have got to stay to home together." Then she laughed as she kissed me

good-by and says " While the *sky* moon aint got nothing but a man in it that 's the way your honeymoon had ought to be."

But I jest smiled as they drove off.

There 's a good deal in what Mame says.

And speaking about the man in the moon when Sis said once it was funny how he never gives us but jest one view of him and that full face Ed said there wan't no doubt it was on account of there being no women there to turn his head.

" Huh! " says Mame, " I 'm familier enough with the vanity of men in general to know the reason he never turns his head is because he 's probbably got an awful homely profeel."

Same Date, 12 o'clock midnight.

I GOT to write this down right now on account of it being so rair and exciting. Along about nine O'Clock when Me and Ed was asetting here nice and peicefull him areading out loud to me and me asewing there came a faint and timmid gnock at the door which, when opened, there stood a great big fat woman closely shrowded in a thick grean vail that said "sh! sh! sh!" as soon as Ed took a small kerosene lamp, and opened it.

"What for?" says he. "What 's up? And who are you?" aputting the lamp close to the woman's face but not revealing her feachers on account of the thickness of her vail.

"There aint nothin partickler up as I know of," come the ancer in a holler whisper through the grean vail, and looking fearfully all around, "but I 'm Poly Blittery and I want to

There stood a great big fat woman closely shrowded in a thick green vail that said "sh! sh! sh!"

come in and talk over something awfully importunate with you."

We was tickled enough to see him and die alaughing I thought we should at his comickle appearance. But he was very grave and sober for him and said he 'd got to get down to bussiness as soon as posserble.

Of course we thought he was in a scraip of some discripshen and Ed asked him, soon as he could speak from laughing, what he 'd been up to now and if the Sherrif was after him.

" Sherrif ! " says Poly ; " who cares anything about *Sherrifs!* Ain't I been brought up on em! It 's Loretty Maria I 'm ahiding from. O, folks! don't let her know I 've come back! I 'm agoing to leave to-morrer again. But I got to talk this matter over with you before I go. It 's very importunate. It conserns, maybe hundreds of feller-creachers."

" And does its influence extend into the Fish World also? " inquired Ed. " It would be interesting to know that."

Then Ed made motions for me not to rea-

leave Poly's fears quite yet because he kind of enjoyed the looks of gennuwine distress that was fraimed in the flower-trimmed bunnet. But I could n't help giving him the joyful news. "Poly," I says, "you aint got nothing more to fear from Loretty Maria. Cappen Joe Silliker married her a cupple o' weeks ago and has gone on a wedding-jerney into troppicle climbs."

Poly's mouth fell open.

"And did she go with him?" he asked, unable to take in at first that the dreaded lady was ackchelly somewheres else besides Chictooset.

"Yes," says Ed, "seeing that was what she married him for she went with him."

I wish I could draw pictures and show exackly what antics Poly went through when at last he was convincitated that our words was true. Off come the woman's skirt and was hove to one side. The bunnet and vail flew the other and you never saw any boy cut up sech didows all over our setting-room as that man weighing most 300 and tall in

proportion. It was his way of giveing free vent to the joy that posessed his soul.

"Free!" he cried in a toan of rapcher, "free at last! Three chears for Cappen Joe!" and then he 'd cut up another caper till I thoght the floar 'd go through, and Ed aholding on to his sides fit to split. Ed's own sides, of course I mean.

Soon as he had carmed down a little and was eating the lunch I set out for him (it was what I had planed for to-morrer's dinner but he was more than wellcome to it) we corngratoolated him on his wondarful forchune that was so far beyond the dreams of the averidge.

With that he sobered right down and says, "That 's what I 'm here for. Its for that I 've risked my libberty and persoot of happyness to-night. I aint had no piece of mind (except other folks's minds) since I got it. I 'm so bothered here there and everywhere by advice and solicitations that I can't stand it another minnet, and Jen there is the only person in all

creation that 'll understand my plan to invest it and insidentaly to bennerfit her feller-creachers at the same time. Now Jennie," he says in a toan of pleading, " I can count on you can't I? "

" Yes, Poly," I says, " you can."

He grabbed aholt of my hand and I guess probbly I aint ever got sech a look of ardent grattitood as what he give me.

Then he unfolded his Plan. One way you look at it it aint maybe a very wise Plan. Seeing it was a very Poly-Blitterish Plan it could n't well be that. But it was an awfull gennerus and whole-hearted Plan and seeing he was asking for help and not for approovel it ended in me and Ed undertaking together the work he 'd laid out for us.

Then he made us register a vow that we would n't divulgitate it to a living soul, not even to my folks. " But how you 're ever agoing to keep it from that Sis of yours gets me. There never was sech sharp eyes and ears put on to a youngone's head before.

Why, I 'm ackchelly scairt of her. I surely am, when I 'm telling a story. If I hapen to be a little might careless and aint percicely accooret about some small detale she 's sure to hall me up on it. Why," he says, " last time I was here and was narrating something about my wanderings and life generelly to entertain her little brothers (God bless 'em!) and hove in a few dates and lengths of time I was in certen places off hand, knowing they did n't notice sech trifels as that, she says when I got throgh in that little precice way she 's got, ' Mr. Blittery,' (squeaking and imitating her voice) ' the way I figger it out, you are 112 years old. I have took down your figgers very carefully ' — (so many years old when I 'd left Chictooset — so many years in California — so many years in the spannish war ect, drat her!) ' and that is what it adds up to on this peice o' paper.' And with a look of self-sattisfaction on her little face she held it out for me to see. I want agoing to look at it any way but I did n't get the chance. Up

jumped Bubby and gragged it and hove it into the fire. 'O Mr. Blittery!' he says (dear confiding little feller!) 'Tell us quick! Which one of the cannable's little boys got the wishbone of the missionery after all?"

"Sis had ought to know," says Ed, "that even truth itself lies sometimes."

"Where?" I says.

"At the bottom of a well."

"She makes me think of what the poet Burns says about 'there's one beside you taking notes,' says Poly. "But I doubt if Burns ever had a contemperrery that took notes ekel to that young one."

"I guess," I says trying to change the subject not wanting to hear him deprecate our Sis, "I guess they did n't have contemperries in Burns's time. Type-writers wan't invented and I guess the poets had to write everything for themselves."

He got good-natured then because I got his mind off Sis and smiled real plessant as he recieved our promise we 'd keep his secret faith-

ful. We talked for 3 steady hours maturitating his plan. And at last he went skiping gayly off, the women's close (forgotten till I 'd picked them up and handed them to him) atrailing over his arm.

I aint even agoing to write down his plan here, because I never know when the young ones will get afoul of the Diary and master all its corntents. And I guess its always jest as well even when you 're supposed to be apouring out your whole heart to kind of keep back a private drop or two.

JUNE 28.

TO-DAY all Allen hearts was rejoiced, children's and grown-ups alike, by a vissit from Poly Blittery. He was fat and smileing and contented as ever and except for the ruther striking resemblences existing between the 2 shoes he wore his appearance was exackly as it always has been.

My! if we want glad to see him and him us!

"But Poly," says Mame, "I 'm supprized you did n't get yourself surveyed first thing for a dandy suit o' close."

"Yes Poly!" says Mandy, her face full of disapointment and a shag grin, "Why aint you got a nice big pladd suit for yourself soon as you 've got the means? I must say I 've always wanted to see you in sech a one on account of you being big enough to show the pattern compleat. Now there 's Lyddy Rogers that aint. She picked out a big pladd for her-

self once and the peices compositing the waste and the skirt was so narrer they was differant parts of the pattern so they did n't appear to be offen the same goods."

Mame laughed. "I guess I recolleck that, too," she says. "In fack that back comes to me on the most sollem occasions — same as when you 're to a funerell or in meeting, and the worst was when it come to me once with resounding force jest when I was taking a last view of the remains. They was red and green and blue and yeller (them colors was) and each one was give fair play throughout. But in the back was where this imparshallity was fullest displayed. 'Lyddy,' I says to her once, 'next time you get beyond yourself jest take a look at your back in the pladd dress.' It 's an awfull mistake what people have so long stuck to, that thin people are most becoming in pladds. Folks always having thought a thing 's so don't make it so."

And Mame was right about this. I know an errer can hold on like grim death some-

times, where a truth would have to let go. The pladd errer is sech a one.

Speaking about Liddy Rogers being so tall and thin calls to mind about Doctor Jameson saying to her once that she 'd ought to have got married — that the fine old Rogers stock had n't ought to die out and her ancesters should have prodooced in her a long line.

"So they did," she snapped out, "a ver-tickle one."

"It 's plessant," says Mame, "to find one person that wealth don't make any differant to their old friends. We kind of thought" (but she did n't really, she knew Poly too well for that) "we kind of thought you 'd snob up after you come into your fortoon and jest swell round among the Vandal Bills and Asters."

"Vandal Bills and Asters!" repeated Poly, with supream contemp. "If any of 'em should attempt to make up to me, I 'd let 'em know!"

"Let 'em know what?" says Sis.

"Let 'em know that seeing their roots aint intertwined with *my* roots down Chictooset way

it 's no use atrying to grow a new freindship with me. Real freindship aint a egg-plum or pear tree that can be grafted on. It has got to come from your roots. And sech would be my ancer, my finel ancer, should any of them swells you mention attemp any intimet or freindly overtures — which they are more than likely not to do."

Then " Girls," he says changing his toan of voice " Have you been amaking gingerbread? "

You see he smelt it and no sooner uttared than a great sheet of it fresh from the oven was placed before him by Mame and a picher of buttermilk. It done us all good to see with what gustoe he et and drunk as he went on talking.

" No," he continnered, " I aint got any pressant use for sech swell famblys as you refer to — as *freinds*, that is. And furthermore than that I want to know what person it is you 're atalking about as having *wealth*. I would like to ask you if you was referring to any person pressant."

"We was referring," says Mame, taking a flat stick of wood and laying it acrost the wood-box and setting down on it (we 're kind of scarce on chairs the best ones being sent to the garret to preserve them) "to a person pressant that has got 75,000$ in cold cash — or did have that amount a cupple o' weeks ago, and as that person is *single*" (here a joyous look overspread Poly's feachers) "and no little ones nor wife depending onto him, it 's safe to assoom he 's got it now."

"It 's *safe* enough to assoom it, as far as that goes," returned Poly, "but it ain't correck to assoom it, seeing that I 'm in a position to know that person aint got a dollar to their name."

The others was all struck speachless at that. Then Mame burst out, "Poly Blittery, dont tell me some miscrint has gouged it all out of you! O Poly! aint you got nothing after all for your old age?"

"Old age fiddlesticks," remarked Poly and I don't know but what he was right. "Old

age," he went on, " aint nothing when you get to it. It wraps you in a garment of peace and rest that aiks and worrys is imperveous to. Young folks pitty the old because they can't have and enjoy the things they do.

" Why, it 's jest like when you 're finishing a hearty meal and you 're tapering off on a little light desert and somebody comes aroistering in late and falls to good and hearty on the corned beaf and turnups. You wonder (being in your dinner old-age, as you might say) how they can eat sech sollid stuff as that. You don't want it. You could n't get it down now if you was hired to. Yet perhaps in the full tide of their enjoyment they 'll look acrost pittying at you as you set there with your little custerd or whatever it is, and pass remarks.

" Yes," he continners thoughtfully after taking a long drink of the buttermilk and wiping his mouth off with his sleave, " pickanicks and good close and tennis and traveling round is life's main dinner, I guess, and tea and your pipe and the chimbly corner are its desert."

"What become of all your money?" inquired Sis, that all these eloquents were waisted on. No hammer and tacks was ever more practicable than that child.

"What become of it? What 's agoing to become of it and bring playsure and enjoyment to them that takes things in the propper sperrit?" Here he paused before making the follering remarkable staitment: "Them 75,000$ goes to erectating a Home for Tramps without Bath-tubs."

"And it 's all done regglear enough. Land bought, papers signed, trustees apointed — not a thing left undone. Its the fructuation of a dream that has long posessed me and no sooner was that money mine than I made it a reality. I heard of a philanthropess over in Sawdunk that had been wanting to put up a home for vagrents for a cupple o' years and was having bean suppers and tableauxs to that end. I was 14 miles from Sawdunk but I lost no time in seaking her out. It did n't take me long to walk the distance. The weather was fine and

the coat I chanced to be wearing, the gift of a gentleman farmer a few months before, was sech in it 's length as to give me perfect freedom in my gait. The originel owner being considdable shorter than myself the coat had somewhat the effeck of an Eton jacket. The 2 waist-line buttens coming as they did in the middle of my spine and prodoocing discomfort against a chair-back (though contack with chair-backs is unusual with me) had been promply removed. In this way it took on to some degree the personallity of the pressant wearer.

" I waited at once upon the philanthropess and I says, ' Lady, I understand you wish to erectuate a home for wandering vagrents. I wish to say it is a movement that has my fullest simpathy and approvel and I will contribbute 75,000$ to this worthy objeck with only one single stippleation.' "

Poly paused.

" What did she say? " cried Mame impatiently.

" As near as I can recall her remarks it was,

'My poor fellow! *Yours* is sech a plessant form of insanity.'

"But I went and got Eliphalet Hatch that had moved there from Chictooset and knew the whole story of the invention and the money and he idemnifyed me to her. Then she wrote to the bank in Whippisangug and found my money was there where I 'd disspossited it.

"Whereupon her feirceness to get aholt of that money knew no bounds. When she found for a fack that she could get it and her pet skeme was to fructify at last she was bound to carry out all her own ideas. I did n't care. There was only one thing I was particklar about. But one day when her and me and a numbar of other inflooenshal men was atalking over some of the detales she says, "Now, Mr. Blittery, (I wan't her poor feller any longer) Mr. Blittery, I wondar when you begin to think this over if you wont think it better after all to have —"

"I guessed what word was acoming out. And I registered a mental vow that if she

spoke that word me and her would part forever. I had axceeded to her every wish and plan but worms do all that and turn at last. She spoke that fatel word. She uttared ' Bathroom ' loud and clear.

" I riz up. I took my hand and held out my cap. ' Lady,' I says, trying not to put too much reproach into my toan of voice, ' Lady, you have tryed me too far. I made but one stippleation but it was a stippleation very near to my heart. You have strove to remove that. I bid you farewell,' and I was gone. That philanthropess will in all probbability never see or hear me again. A golden oportunity had fell upon her devoted head but it never gnocks twice on the same place. She will live to realize this."

" And so you give it all up? " inquired Jim. " Some folks might say that looked as if you did n't have no sech intentions to begin with."

" Listen. Seaking the solitood of a distant hay-mow for the night I roominated on all that had passed. Then a thoght like a thundar-

bolt took posession of me. Renounce my cherrished plan I would not. I can't understand why that thoght had n't come to me long before. Why had I sought among strangers a philanthropess to carry out my skeme when down in old Chictooset was the sweetest and kindest and wisest little woman God ever made, and a naturel-born philanthropess into the bargen?"

(this was some of his foolishness but I write it down exackly as he said it.) "She 'll give me her full simpathy and counsell and her clever little head and hands will accomplish all that I have dreamed. She 'll never stop to think what *she 'd* like if *she* went atramping (dear little home-bird that ain't hardly been out of its nest) but she 'll take my word for it what 's fancyed by them that 's tramped their lives through. Furthermore than that, this little woman that 's never thought of herself at all, has got married right in the nick o' time (for my purpose, I mean) to a first-class, wide-awake bussiness man. The combination (for me) was

perfeck. I looked up through the apertoors of the roof at the stars above me and I registered a vow to seek them out at all risks and ask their aid."

"And why did n't you?" says Sis.

"Why did n't I? Because I *did* and my one boast in the whole mattar is that one partickler person of immattor age but joined on to the most piercing eyes and ears in creation and her name spelling backrard and forrard the same, never got wind of it till I thoght proppar."

Without noticing Sis's look of amazement he went on:

"In the silance of the night I came disguised to this dwelling. I had strong reasons for believing that my liberty and pursoot of happyness was in Jeppardy. This little woman," amotioning towards me, "releaved my fears on this point. I hove aside my disguisement and talked bussiness with my freinds." After a pause he added "That 's all excep that any poor sick feller, that aint got any folks nor home nor strenth to work can have a place to

come in and lay his aiking bones in a soft warm bed and go to sleep.

" And where there wont be 66 questions for him to answer — no two of 'em alike — in an offiss and no coffin-box full o' water that he 's got to cramp himself up in.

" And the matron (or patron) is agoing to get imposed upon often enough. We 're expecting that, and I 'd ruther be imposed on a dozen times than let one poor sensitive feller go ashrinking and acreaping by with only a wishful look inside because he dreads either the Questions or the Bath-tub."

" Poly Blittery," says Mame, her eyes astreaming with tears as she set the other sheat of gingerbread down before him, " Poly Blittery, you 're a big foolish ridicklous great-hearted saint! "

" Saint nothing! " says Poly. " Here 's the saints," — pointing to Ed and me — " that 's having all the work and bother. That invention was the work of an idle hour and the money was ackchelly foarced onto me."

He stretched himself and drawed a long breath of releaf. "Thank Heaven I 'm done with it all," he says. "Got a little tobacker you want to give away, Ed?"

Then "Gee! aint it mortal lonesome without Jim!"

The Home is agoing to be a splendid one. It 'll be in Sawdunk, the nearest citty, seeing no sech place is needed in Chictooset. Sech sunnyness! sech homeyness! sech comfort as there 'll be! We can't hardly wait till it 's done.

It 's near the river, too, and tramps being kind of amphibeous, as you might say, Poly's stippleation wont have sech a very bad effeck. Besides that there 's a movement on foot to introduce foot-tubs and make them opshenal.

When I proposed this Poly looked quick and suspitious at me. "This ain't a entering Wedge, is it, Jen?"

"Poly," I says, looking straight into his eyes, "aint you trusting me?" And he says alooking jest as straight into mine, "I be."

Later.

I have conclooded I won't put nothing at all in the Diary about the Vagrent's Home because there 's so much to it it would crowd out everything else. And furthermore than that Ed is agoing to keep an exack record of everything that transpires about it.

But the work is agoing on beautifull. To be sure there 's hitches but we 've prepared our minds for so many that these don't worry us.

Won't we all be proud and happy of the finished produck.

CHICOOSET, Sunday June 30th.

WE 're agoing home to-morrer.

Kind of a sad time this morning in spite of the robbins singing so pretty and happy among the trees on account of them all clustering round us after meeting to bid us good by and give us cooking reciepts ect. that they 'd been promising us. Parson Wadkins had allooded about us going away in a fealing manner in his sermon and as if that was n't enough what did old Deacon Atticks jest before Sabbath school and when nobody had n't sech an idee in their head do but rise up and make a speach to the effeck that no odds where this fambly went (not naming no names) that had partook of all Chictooset's joys and sorrers to the excess that this fambly had partook of them for a cupple o' months in the recent past and whole generations in a more remoater past, that this fambly (still naming no names but all pres-

sant being corgnizant who he meant) might go to the uttarmost and furtherest ends of the earth " yet still," he says, verry sollem and earnest, " be one of us as you might say, *be* " (and here his voice was raised a trifle higher and no one minded if it *did* squeek and crack to a serten extent seeing the Deacon is held in sech great respect in the commoonity) " of our bone and sinnew, striking responcible echos in every Chictooset breast.

" You may break," he concluded in a deap toan of voice, " you may shattar the vace if you will, the scent of the roses will linger there still."

It was a lovely speach and I think it was jest beautifull him compairing us to roses and the old homestead to a vace. Nachelly enough it made us all cry a little but I must say I was supprised to see how deap Ed was affected by them words. Poor feller. He buryed his face in his hands and shook and shook. My husband has got an awful tendar heart and no mistake.

Yes, we feal bad enough about leaving but then there 's Jim all alone off there in Providence that we 're jest about crazy to see and him us. It 'll be like that I expeck, when we 're called to Heaven. This world is so beautifull and full of love and joy that I guess we would n't ever be willing to leave it if it want for them that 's awaiting and alonging for us there.

So good-by, dear old Chictooset, from us all.

PROVIDENCE, July 3.

ANOTHER beautifull trip in the Frederick Morrison. Mame drew the state-room this time. Seeing we was now sech experianced travellers we got the full enjoyment of every particklar.

Thick and rainy. Sis says to-day, "The sun ain't shone once since we got home."

"I ain't noticed that," says happy Jim.

PROVIDENCE, July 22.

WE are now in our own home — Ed and me — in our own home.

I have jest read over these four words and been awondering if any other four words mean so much.

But Jim says — and he says it abeaming all over with satisfaction — that there aint reely any new home at all as he looks at it but a kind of a spreading out of the old one. We was lucky enough to get the tenement in the other side of his house which was always unpoplar on account of being at the very end of the court and the furtherest away from the cars in storms and slippery weather — "last and not leased," as Ed says. The landlord has had a door cut through into Jim's side and I guess there aint a doorway anywheres else in private life that is used so much and so continuous as that door is. In fack, sech is

the vaigness of boundery line between the two households that little David, Jim's baby, don't know nothing about it and toddles round between the two as the fancy seazes him, and running to me for refuge, same as he always has, when his mother tries to wash his face and hands.

We have got a lovely home and if it melts off into another one instead of ending with out-doors and strangers it is all the lovelier still. But we don't want it to stop off too distinck anywheres but to be nothing more than a nucleuss, as you might say, of a light that shines all around so that a good many will get some little benefit from us loving each other.

Yes, it 's an awful pretty home and we have got everything in it that heart can wish for — no, not that, for when there 's nothing left for heart to wish for the joy of life is gone. I 've seen a mottow that says "T is not the worst when we can say this is the worst," and I guess it 's jest as true that it ain't the best when we can say this is the best.

If you *know* you are going to have something nice there aint much difference between that and ackchelly having it if your faith and imagination is in decent working order. Now there 's our red stuffed easy-chair that 's agoing to be in the corner of our setting-room when we get able and that easy-chair has got so reel to us while we 've been planning about it that Ed says it 's his constant prayer that he wont forget and try to set down in it before it 's ackchelly there. We have paid cash down for everything and that is always going to be our rule. We had the most beautiful time agoing round and picking out the things that was best and prettyest for the money, aided by Mame who has got awful good jedgment and shrewd at a bargain. She says I don't know no more about bargains than the angel Gabriel but I 'm alearning. I aint agoing to waste any of Ed's money. He works too hard for it. He could help me out lots of time afiguring on the grocery bills but I don't like to pester him about them little things. I think a fambly had ought

to be like a watch, the man for the hour hand and the wife the minute hand.

Once jest before we was married when me and Mame was down town atending to the picking out Ed came into our house and Jim asked him what he 'd like for a wedding-present from him and Mame. He says, " Aint you heard Jen express any wish? "

" No, I aint," he says, " but want me to tell you what I guess we 'd like better 'n anything else in the world? "

" Sure. Aint that what I 'm atrying to get at? "

" Well, it 's Jen's little sewing-chair there that she 's alwers set in and where I done my courting. Can we have that? "

Ed told me about it afterwards. He said Jim looked awfull sober at the little chair, then he looked away.

" Why," he says at last kind of slow, " I spose you can have it if you feel like that about it, but " — and he looked again towards it as if he was atrying to think how the cor-

ner would look if it was n't there, (you see anybody 's bound to be missed more or less that 's stayed to home as steddy as I did) " we been thinking there 'd be lots of times after she was marryed that she 'd ockipy it same as she does now."

Ed says it had n't ever come over him before (over Ed, I mean) what it meant to Jim and all the rest to have me go away even only on the other side of the wall and it made him feel like a theaf in the night.

" You 're right, Jim," he says, " and come to think of it she 'll probbly want it kep jest where it is now. But," he says, " I know of a solemn oak centre table that she 's jest about crazy over. When we 've been in Plunkett's together I 've seen her ahanging round and admiring it when she did n't know I was alooking. That was one of the times when I wished we had a little dite more to spend."

Of course we 've got the table and it 's a beauty. Mandy give us the angle lamp that hangs up over it. She picked it out herself

and I think it shows an onusuel amount of sense for Mandy. She is awfull proud of it. She says her first thought was a parrot, thinking it would be company for me when Ed was off on his trips and kind of take his place. Then it came over her that more often than not parrots swore and it would be a bad example for the little boys.

"Yes, I 'm glad you changed your mind, Mandy," says Mame when she was here with her sewing one evening and we was talking it over. "There 's lots to be said in faver of parrots but you know how we all feel about dumb animals" (as if any parrot was that) "and you know Jennie would alwers be letting him out of the cage and every chance he got he 'd be flying out of the winder. And what kind of a figger would he cut aswooping into the neighbors and aflopping round?"

"A Polly gone," says Ed.

Well, I was agoing to say that angle lamp was exackly what we needed. When Ed was aputting it up with Jim's help he says to me,

" It 's like our love, Jennie. It don't cast no under shadow."

Some loves do, I 'm afraid.

Dear little Gussy give us the most precious possession he had — his baby rabbit. It looked kind of funny in the list of gifts in the *Chic-tooset Arrow*, "Master Augustus Allen, a young rabbit," but I would n't have it left out.

Most all of our wedding gifs was usefull ones, but each one is a thing of beauty jest the same, even to the big blue wash-tub that was give to us by Mrs. Hennersey along with the red table-cloth. Ellen said I could put the table cloth with the other pretty things to show to folks but her mother was so bent on the wash-tub besides that she did n't have the heart to discurrage her. " It 's a wash-tub she 'll have to be having anny way," she says, " and manny 's the toime she 'll be using it from first to last, and if there 's the thought of a frind in it maybe it 'll lighten her work a bit."

" Thin good-by to you," she says when we was all aleaving for here. " Good-by to you

and good luck. There 's a special blessing I 'm praying you 'll have, Jennie darlin', and I 'm asking for it all the time."

" And I 'll pray for it with Mother," put in Ellen, " and I 'll pray you 'll be getting it very soon."

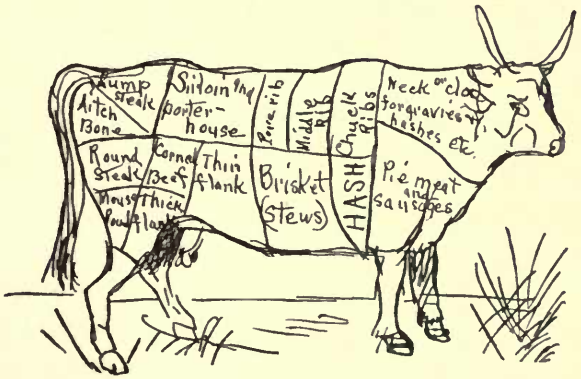
" Oh, stop that, girl," cries her mother in great alarm. " Stop that. Sure it 's the grace of a happy death I 'm asking for her."

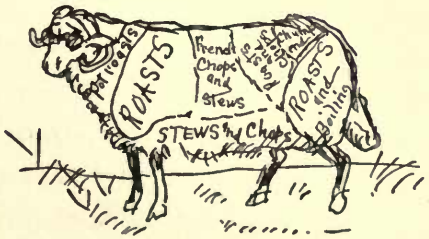
Heaven looks to us all, I expeck, much as the sollid earth does to somebody that 's been persuaded to go up in a balloon — an awfull plessant place to be but one we don't want to get to too quick.

Speaking of the tub, I think it depends on your soul's eyes whether anything appears groce or fine.

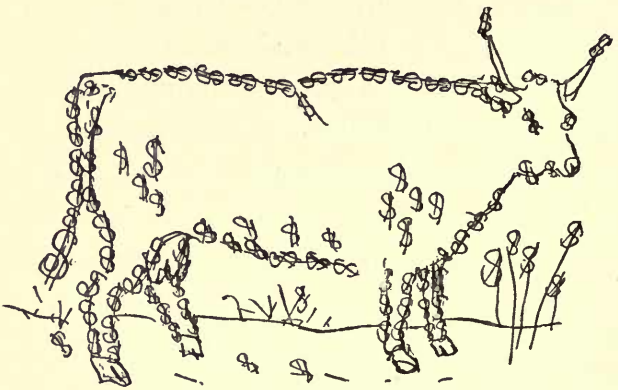
A city woman I know of that had kep boarders for years and had got all wore out broke down very sudden and the doctor said she 'd have to go off into the country for a compleat rest. So she went to Chictooset. At first she could n't rest, though she knew the

importance of it and tryed to do so with all her might and mane. She was told to jest set and look at the cows and sheep that was afeeding in the fields and take example from their peacefull behavior. But she said it was a long time before she could make them look any different from what they did in the reciept book — like this:





Now to Sime Peters that owned them there ain't any doubt they looked like this:



And to an artist that came along and put them in a picture most probbly they looked like daubs of brown paint. Anyway that 's what they was in the picture.

But when that woman begun to rest up and the cows with all their peace had sunk into her soul she saw them as they was, and she even got fond of a little calf that belonged to the man of the house that would eat out of her hand. So much so that when that calf was killed and brought on the table as veal she

bust right out acrying and had to leave the table. They all said how nervous it still showed she was. But to my mind it showed she was better. Her soul's eyes was aclearing. And I don't wonder at the way she felt. I don't think I could ever eat an animal I had known personally.

I 've heard about a little boy that said that wash day comes the nex day after Sunday becaues cleanliness is nex to godlyness. And when I get up early Monday morning fresh from my Sabbath rest, and, as Ed says, set about the weekly purification of the fambly vestments, I can make it seem almost like a religious right. And if the kind giver of the big blue wash-tub with its clean white paint inside had had it ackchelly "blessed" it could n't seem more to me like the sacred vessels inside the temple at Jerusalem.

The dining-room aint been papered yet excep with imaginary paper of a buff ground and green and perple grapes and the paste being imaginary too, it dont stick on very well yet so

I 'm glad the table, that we alwers keep set, gives so much bright color. The red of the cloth looks jest lovely through the thin white cloud of moskeeter netting we keep over it and the spoons in the spoon-holder is all aglitter through it.

I should be ashamed if anybody knew how many times a day I go open the cubbard door and look in at all them beautiful dishes Miss Musgrove give us. Ed says it 's going to be a strain to scurry round and get vittles worthy of them. But I know he dont mean it. They are too plain and simple to give any sech worry as that.

Of course Natalie, not coming in contack before with folks of jest ordinerry means, did n't think to give anything useful and I 'm glad she did n't, because it would n't look like her if she did. If the tub and the red table-cloth was from her and whistling water-color from Mrs. Hennersy they would lose ½ of their meaning.

Then it 's a great help us having so many

things from Ed's old home, the rag carpet for the setting-room that his mother made herself, the big varnished pine rocking-chair for the kitchen with the bright fruit painted on the back and the patch-work cushion, the old clock that was aticking away when Ed was born and all the rest of the things that make it seem more homey because they aint new. A house where everything looks like it had jest been brought from the store is a sad looking picture. You don't durst hardly to settle down in an easy staying posture for fear the installment collector may come in any minute.

Ed's mother is acoming day after to-morrow and we 'll be all nicely settled then. Her room is fixed up beautifull for her. Everybody in the fambly pitched in and helped get it ready for her. Sis hemed the musling sash-curtains, Bub and Gussy made the shelf for her books and nailed it up, Jim tacked down the straw matting, but all baby David done was to upset a bottle of blacking on the matting. I run to

get a rag to wipe it up best I could but when I come back Sis grabed my arm and says, "Don't touch it, Aunt Jennie. Don't you see what it's a map of?"

"Maine?" I says.

"Course it's Maine," says Sis awful excited. "Look at Cascow Bay. Look at Penobscot Bay. Look how it all comes up to a square point jest the very way it had ought to. Don't you think Granny'll be tickled to death to step out on her native state every morning first thing?"

I looked at Sis's blackened fore-finger and I suspected it had assisted chance to a considdable extent but I done as she beged me and let the map stay expecially as it was in front of the bed where we was agoing to put one of Granny's home-drawn mats anyway. If it was close to the wall it would be different. A mat close to the wall would rouse suspition in any chance visiter. But Mame wan't agoing to have the baby spoilt by him going unpunished. She'd borrored a step ladder to tack

up the winder curtains with and was atop of it when it happened.

" Jennie, you tend to the baby," she says, her mouth full of tacks.

Tending to him meant slapping his hands and I had to do it though its hard to hurt them pretty hands and take away for ever so breafly the happiness out of the baby face. Sis, seeing my reluctuation, said I was a Roman Aunt.

" Much obliged," says Mame without looking round but knowing by the howl that follered that the onpleasant duty was performed.

I dont know as a woman can show any more conferdence in you than by letting you chastize their little child, knowing your stroak is padded with love. I pitty anybody else that would darst to lay a hand on Baby even if he 'd spilt a map of the whole world and all its tributerries on the floar.

PROVIDENCE, July 24.

SHE 's come and the dearest thing of all we 've got from Ed's old home is his mother. One thing Jim's house always lacked was a grandmother. There aint nothing, to my mind, that makes a place so cozy and settled down as a nice old lady asetting round with her knitting or patch-work smiling pleasant — I wont even except a cat — and when that old lady is the mother of the man you love I guess you know how I feel about it.

She must have been an awfull handsome woman in her day. She 's got handsome brown eyes now that has got a look like Ed's in them. She 's tall and kind of staitly for anyone her age and her hair aint but a very little gray. She 's jest the opposite to Mother in her whole appearance but inside she 's got a lot of Mother's qualitys.

She 's come and the dearest thing of all we've got from Ed's old home is his mother

When she came in late this afternoon aleaning on Ed's arm and both walking very slow I felt a blessing was entering with her. My heart was beating awfull fast but I kep outwardly carm as I went to meet them. I shan't ever forget the look that was in them brown eyes as they looked into mine — they seemed so full of pleading. I jest threw my arms around her neck and cryed and cryed and cryed. Ed did n't know what to make of me but I could only say, " O, I did n't know before how much I wanted a mother."

Then because she was tired after her long journey I would n't let any of the other fambly see her to-night but I give her a nice cup of tea and toast and helped her to bed in the pretty room.

An hour later.

After she 'd dropped peacefully off to sleep I went in again and stood by the bed alooking down at her as she laid there in her clean white night cap.

"Ed's mother!" I whispered over and over. "Ed's mother! that aint had a home for years and years, that aint lived under the roof with her boy for years and years and now she 's home with him at last!"

"And you 've got the chance, Jennie Spinney, to do this service for the man you love — to care for his mother every day of her life."

"How good God is!"

"Jennie," says Ed, when I come back into the setting-room calm and happy and he 'd took me into his arms, "I aint ever loved my wife as I love her now."

PROVIDENCE, August 24.

ELLEN CAFFRETTY has jest been in and we had a lovely talk of over an hour. Her and Dinny was married in April before me and Ed was in May. That reminds me of what Mrs. Sawyer said when I told her the wedding was agoing to be in May.

"O Jennie!" she says, kind of horrified, "I guess you forgot the old saying,

'Married in May,
You 'll rue the day,
Both bride and groom
Will be cast in gloom.'

You 'll have to change the date, wont you?"

Ed had n't ever heard the saying before and the rhyme kind of took his fancy. He often says it over now to the tune of a cake-walk he learned of Ellen that he executes at the same time. "Married in May," he sings while he

waltzes down the lenth of the room, and "You 'll rue the day," he goes on as he waltzes back again. And when he comes to the word *gloom* he winds up with a handspring. One day when he had went through the performance he says, "Aint that about so Mother?" and she, abeaming at him over her spectacles, says, "Edward Joseph, what kind of capers is them for a married man? Jennie will think she has got a wild man of Borneo for a husband." But bless you! Nothing delights her like his high sperrits.

But to go back to Ellen. "O Jen," she says to me jest now, "I 'm so happy it seems as if it could n't last, as if something *must* happen to put an end to it all. Every time I kiss Dinny good-by in the morning I think, "Sposing it 's for the last time," for it may be I 've had all the joy that 's coming to me and it can't go on no longer. And I don't reely darst to look forrard to seeing him again at night for something terrible may befall him and me never see him any more."

And she calls that happiness. To me it seems the greatest mizzery there is. It 's like riding through the woods in winter all snug and warm in your sleigh and seeing straight ahead a wolf with jaws wide open to devour you. But that is like one of Ellen's papal bulls to say she is so happy she lives in mizzery and dread.

" How can you be so calm asetting there, Jennie Spinney, when you aint seen Ed for a week " (he is off on one of his trips) " and you don't know as you 'll ever see him again? You can't love like I do or you could n't do it."

Not love like she does! I jest took Ed's old coat I was amending and burying my face in it, whispered something awfull foolish to it that I wouldent darst to say to Ed himself if he was here. I say lots of things to his old clothes that I couldent say to him. But sometimes I believe what so many people say is true, that thoughts are things and perhaps he absorbs them into him for he often remarks he is happyest in his old clothes.

"I 'm so happy," I says aloud to Ellen, "that nothing can affect it. It 's like a big rock that things come aswashing and abanging against and leaves it straight and strong as it was before. It 's a part of me now and the biggest part, too. I could n't work up a worry even if I thought it was my duty to do it which I know it aint. I 've lost all realizing sense of what sadness and fear is. I 'm numb to them."

Before she could answer Dinny come for her and the joy in her pretty face was something to see.

"O Dinny, Dinny!" she cried, and run and laid her head against his chest like he had been rescued from some terrible desaster though he 'd foaned he 'd be here at half past 5 and it wanted 6 minutes to it then.

I jest manniged to grab the greasy bundle of ham he was aholding under his arm before she mashed it against her new light jacket. And when they went away her eyes was shining as she looked up at him. And he was as

bad as her for he sung out to me, "Good-night, Mis' Spinney! call again. Ye 're alwers welcome here!"

Ed plagues Ellen about her Irish temperment that don't know much middle ground between laughter and tears. Her old beaux, Ben Sawyer, used to think he had n't ought to refer about her being Irish when she was round and once when they was to Jim's to supper he says, "What kind of potaters do you wish, Ellen? sweet ones or — or — the other kind?"

"Irish, of course," says Ellen, her eyes adancing.

"Potaters aint like girls," says Ed who was there, too. "They can't be sweet and Irish both."

Yes, they was going to have fried ham for supper to-night and frying nights is alwers the happyest ones for them because then Ellen don't have to be home before Dinny is same as when there 's got to be something baked or boiled, so then she can call for him at the shop or have him call here or somewheres else

for her and they can walk home together (she says her mother must be a lady now and not work at all). And she says these walks home are so plessant that frying nights are agetting to be more and more frequant.

Jim told Dinny it would be the ironing of fate if her excess of affection should be the ruin of his digestion for some writer has said that the frying-pan has killed more people than the sword. But Dinny said, "I don't care. What 's indigestion to a walk home with Ellen? It aint to be compared with it." And Ed says, "He don't want to die-jest yet."

I do miss Ed to-night though I feel that we are always together in sperrit. Sometimes I try to telepath to him, and though he knows I 'm communicating with him he don't get jest the message I send. If I telepath for him to be sure and take his cold tablets he 's more than likely to get it that I want him to go out and have a social little game of cards with the boys jest to cherk him up on account of him being so lonesome without me. But if it

turns out that this little festivity has done him more good than the tablets what right have I got to find fault with telepathy? Did n't it know more about what was required than me?

Once he brought me a beautiful pearl breastpin and when he saw I felt bad because he was so extravagant, he says, " Why, I thought you was telepathing for it. I seemed to feel it right through and through me especially up and down my spinel collum and in the region of my breast-pocket. Don't you want it, dear? "

" I 've wanted a pearl breastpin all my life," I says, the tears starting to my eyes at his love and thought for me.

" But you would n't ever brooch the subjeck," he says, " and now you 've telepathed unconscious."

It not being more exact in your messages I can see would be a disadvantage in some cases, for it aint always that you want a messenger to adapt himself to circumstances. That is what McFarland Tortrum, the boy that lives

acrost the street is always doing, when you send him on arrants. He comes back and says, "I did n't spose you 'd want the old man to know it so I said I 'd come again on account of it being kind of private," when it might be your arrant affected the old man most of all and he was the best one reely to send back the answer.

"You jest do as I tell you," Mame often says to him, "and if I ketch you adaptuating yourself to circumstances, as you call it, or using your own jedgment, you 'll see what will foller."

That 's one good thing about a clock, that it don't adapt itself to circumstances. How unpoplar a clock would be that would do that. Perhaps it makes it seem heavy and stupid and sometimes onfeeling besides, not to do it but in the long run it 's more satisfactory. Sposing it should say to itself — I 'm thinking now of our town-clock down to Chictooset — sposing it says, "I guess I better not strike now for a couple of hours or so on account of old

lady Plunkett being so low nex door. The neighbors would take it very kind and feeling of me."

But they would n't. And it dont. And poor old lady Plunkett is terrible distressed by it and thinks the clock is inside of her head on account of being kind of delirible and apologizes reel pretty to the folks around her bedside for making sech a racket with it, but cant help it (so she says) because her false front aint on to shut in the sound, and finelly and painfully passes out into the grate beyond.

Is the clock agast at what it has done? And does it get rattled and confused and strike when it hadnt ought to, or not strike when it had ought to? Far from it and that 's where you might say its appearant hardness comes in.

And sometimes when a poor over-worked woman sewing late into the night looks up wearily into its face and says, " I 'd ought to go to bed seeing I 'm all beat out but I guess I 'll stay up one more hour and do the worst

of the mending," why don't it when she aint alooking ram its hands forrard to the nex hour and give that poor soul a little refreshing sleep?

And then sposing it would think sometimes at 12 oclock at night it wan't necessary to give the whole 12 strokes seeing taint likely any one is awake at that hour and counting up to see if it give good maysher, and so save that much strenth for another time.

I said something like this to McFarland once when he 'd made a mess of things by fixing up a message to suit the case — as he saw it. Of course when I was talking about clocks I was thinking about people and speaking in a kind of a parabolic way.

He saw what I meant quick enough and he says, " Well you 've got a couple of clocks to your house named Bub and Gus. They blart out whatever they 've got to say, no matter who 's round. Mother has learned me to use a little tackt."

And that 's no dream, as you might say.

Art Tortrum, the boy's father (I expect his name is Arthur but I aint ever heard him called anything but "Art") is always in dets and difficultys, as the saying is. Its kind of a funny saying because it sounds as if dets was n't difficultys — which perhaps they aint to some people.

Well, when a stranger goes to the Tortrums door and rings you can jest about make up your mind it 's a dun. Then my heart aches for Mrs. Tortrum who has to keep Art out of the way and go to the door herself. I was there once when one of these men came — a real nice soft-spoken man — and he says, "I should like to see Mr. Tortrum."

"So should I," says his wife, looking awfull wistful, "very much indeed."

"O, aint he to home? Where is he?"

"I don't know" — still more wistful — "and I don't know when he 'll come back."

"Which was true, want it?" she says when the man had gone and Art come creeping out of the clothes-press; "I did n't know that was

where you was or jest how long you could stay in sech a stifling place."

But she 'd told a falsehood jest the same. Words is like instruments give to us to convey facks and fealings. She had conveyed the wrong facks and it did n't make no odds how she 'd used her instruments.

" But what could she do? " Ed says when I told him about it and he pertended to stand up for her. She was very skilfull in shealding her husband. " Ars est celere artem," he says, which is in lattin and means " it is an art to conceal Art."

But when folks has to resort to a forrin language you can tell they 're run ashore for arguments, and I told him so.

PROVIDENCE, September 2.

I 'VE been taking notice quite a spell that Granny's spectacles don't fit any better than they 'd ought to and it 's time for her to be having new ones. She don't make no complaint but I can tell by the way she squizzles up her eyes when she reads that her pressant ones aint suitable and I says to Ed to-day after I 'd told him about it, " We 've got to consult an optimist right away."

" All right," he says, " and I guess he 'll prescribe rose-colored glasses for Mother."

PROVIDENCE, October 8.

I know a little maid, calm and serene,
Who sits all day long at a sewing-machine;
The stitches are many, the tread beats along,
And to ears and to heart they are singing a song.

Click-a-click-click, click-a-click-click,
Dances the needle, bright and quick,
Whirls the big wheel around, whir, whir, whir.
When I but hear the sound, think I of her,
Ever of her.

On a long, long seam from morning till night,
How the bright garments stream, red, blue, pink and white!
But not garments alone this sweet maid is sewing
'T is joy that she 's weaving and over all throwing.

Click-a-click-click, click-a-click-click,
Dances the needle bright and quick,
Whirls the big wheel around, whir, whir, whir.
If I but hear the sound, think I of her,
Ever of her.

The needle's bright eye and its long tail of thread
Lead on a new cry with her foot on the tread,
Why, you 're sewing your heart like a big valentine
To my heart and my life, O little maid mine!
Click-a-click-click, click-a-click-click,
Dances the needle bright and quick,
Whirls the big wheel around, whir, whir, whir.
If I but hear the sound, think I of her,
Ever of her.

I may wander afar, I may go where I will;
That murmuring music will follow me still,
And will draw me, as if by a cable of gold,
Back, back to that tenderest fireside fold.

Click-a-click-click, click-a-click-click,
Dances the needle bright and quick,
Whirls the big wheel around, whir, whir,
whir.
If I but hear the sound, think I of her,
Ever of her.

This is a poem that Ed has jest come acrost among his insurence papers (jest like a nugget of gold in clay, I tell him, or a bright flower in a swamp) and give it to me to read.

It is jest beautifull poetry and the chorus makes music for itself and dances in your head long after you 've read it.

He says he remembers well enough the night he wrote it. It was soon after he 'd took the room in our house and he was all alone up there and homesick as the Dickens (his very words) when he heard my machine agoing amid the hooting and racing round of our little boys and Jim's laugh. Then when they had quieted down he heard Mame singing

the baby to sleep with the same murmering accompament.

He says Cupid aint particklar what he uses for an arrer in his bow but adaptuates himself to circumstances and uses whatever 's handy by. Sometimes it 's a flower, sometimes it 's the evening star. But declares he himself is living proof with what deadly effeck a sewing-machine neadle can be used.

I think he could get paid for his poetry if he ever sent it on but he jest laughs and says it aint worth sending on. Mr. Oglevie, the minnestar, asked him once why he didnt send jokes to the funny papers, and he said he had.

"And did they pay you well?" says Mr. Oglevie.

"I can't complain," he answers; "when I send them funny things they send me funny things, too."

Often when my heart is full I wish I could express myself in poetry same as he does to me. But maybe there is different ways of writing pomes. Every seam of sewing I do

for him I make believe is a line of poetry because I put my whole heart into it. When I heard Sis say there was 14 lines in a sonnet I was making his new dressing-gown so I quilted 14 lines of stitching on the sleaves and collar. And then I says, "These are my love sonnets for you, dear, because sewing is the only gift God has give to me."

"O my Jen! O my little poet of a wife!" he says, "no one but me can ever read them dear sonnets. And no one else should ever read them though there was ever so clever a rime tacked on to every line. If Elizabeth Browning (she was a lady that was a poetess who married a man that was one, too) had wrote her love with neadle instead of pen all its sacredness and misterry would not be laid bare to the whole world same as it is now."

Then he told me all about Mr. Browning and Mrs. Browning pouring out their whole hearts to each other in their love letters (same as anybody is apt to do) and after they was

dead they was put in books and sold in the stores for 2 dollars and a half!

It made me shiver jest to hear about it. "What if that should happen to me?" I says.

"Never fear, love," he says; "them sonnets of ours can never be translated by prosterity. Besides," he added, a twinkle acoming into his eyes, "I doubt if them collar and cuffs would ever bring any sech fancy price. No value excep to the owner and to him they are priceless."

But it would n't be him if he did n't have some fun over it and the nex day when he saw me asetting down before a big quilting frame where I was agoing to quilt one of Mother Spinny's quilts that I had put into it he says,

"Gee whittaker! If she aint begun an eppick!"

He talks so educated and genteel that I often wish I was n't so far behind him. And I am atrying with all my might to speak correck so that he wont be ashamed of me — no, I know he would never be that — but I mean

so that folks would n't wonder he was n't. This makes me take heed to things I never noticed before. Like when Sis said once " Me and Uncle Ed " and then changed it quick to " Uncle Ed and I." I says then, " I must remember to say Ed and I and you must remind me, Sis, when I don't say it." And I said it over a number of times to get used to it.

" There! " says Sis. " You don't have to say it so many times as all that. You act as if you *liked* to say it."

" Why, so I do," I says.

This seemed so easy that I made up my mind to learn one proper thing to a time and it would be a good simple way to master the grammar. But one day when I said " Ed and I " I was in despair when Sis said, " There 's times when that ought to be ' Ed and me ' on account of being in the objective case."

Here was a rock in my path sech as I was unprepared for but I would fight it with sword and daggar till even its very roots was washed

away. I hadnt ever heard of the objective case before as I know of but I am working on it now by spells with Sis to help me. She is tickled to death to do it because she is a natural-born teacher. She cackleates to go to the normal school and become a popular teacher, so she says, and she is glad to practice on me because the little boys wont let her.

Still I wouldnt ever fuss over foolish little things in grammar that some folks do. Like when Mame was telling about a woman that lived on the East Side once and she said she summered in Maine and wintered in Niece so she only springed and falled in Providence.

"You should say sprang and fell," says Mrs. Sawyer.

And then another time she tried to correck Jim. He was in the habit of going up to Ed's room when he lodged up stairs and borrowing magazines. He liked the funny ones pretty well and one night he says to him, "Spinney, I been upstairs and took a dozen 'Lifes.'"

" Why dont you say you have took a dozen lives," says Mrs. Sawyer, " and be correck? "

" The police might hear me," says Jim.

No, the grammer aint anywheres near as simple as I thought it was when I started in and sometimes I am almost on the verge of discurridgement. Yesterday when Sis and I was rassling again with the objective case, I declared that if love wan't at the hellum (you see I was doing this all for Ed) my small ship would soon be lost among the rocks and precipices of grammer.

" If you think this is so hard," says she, " what will you do when you come to the predicatious absolutive? " (which is as near as I can remember it).

That staggered me a minute, and then, " Maybe I 'll die before that," I says hopefully.

Of course it wan't long before Ed took notice I was looking after my speach pretty severe.

" Who 's the guilty one that I may slay him? " he inquired in pretentious indignation.

"Who has opened my wife's innocent eyes to the knowledge of good and evil grammer?"

Then I told him my plan.

He looked kind of grave at first, then he says, "What makes you trouble your dear head about sech matters? They aint the essenshel things."

"It 's for you, Ed," I says.

"O, no," he says; "dont say that. I love you better as you are."

"You can't mean that. You can't mean you like bad grammer."

"I like yours. I aint saying I like anybody else's. It 's like this: don't you recolleck saying, Jen, that if my nose *does* happen to be too big and of uncouth outline that you liked it because it was a part of me?"

"I said something that amounted to that and I meant it, too."

"Well, in spite of your affection for this interesting feacher would you ever care to see it if it was removed from me?"

"O Ed, don't!"

"I jest wanted to bring this thing home to you — that 's all."

Ed was aspeaking of his big nose once and kind of apologizing for having that kind of a nose and Mame reminded him that 't was said all great men have big noses.

"But do big noses always have big men?" he says; "that 's the important question."

I knew his did for one.

I often wonder why it is folks is expected to have jest sech shape and jest sech size noses and other feachers. A nose primaryly is an instrument to smell with, as you might say, and if its a good satisfactory smeller why aint that enough? And so with the eyes and mouth. Mrs. Sawyer's eyes as *seers* was the best I ever come acrost. It was even said by some that she could see things that wan't so, but I guess there 's no truth in that any more than that big nose of Ed's smells what aint so. Well, jest because them eyes (doing their full duty all the time, mind you) wan't situated in her head quite the same as the common run and was n't

as big as some others, they was criticized and poked fun at. Now if that was all eyes was for, jest to be handsome, and to be hung up like pictures on the face or agrowing there like flowers in a garden it would be all right to find fault if they was hombly. Or if noses (having no function at all) was something that was screwed onto anyone's face after they was all done jest as an extry ornament, there 'd be some sense in grumbling about their appearance. For my part I never found fault with Mrs. Sawyer's eyes, much less with Ed's nose.

Then I told him some of the troubles I was having, " especially," I says, " when you and I is in the objective case."

" I don't care," he answers, " what case you and I are in as long as we 're there together. Now, look here, wifey dear. You 're agoing to conquer this troublesome point in grammer because labor and patience like yours conquer everything. But is it worth while? I think I hear the minister at your funeral (though I shall not be there) giving vent to something

like this: 'The sister that is alaying here, beloved brethren, is a woman who was always a willing slave to one great ambition, that of mastering the objective case. To this she was more than faithful. Through a long and (negatively perhaps) virtuous life her interest in that objective case never wavered. Never once did she sacrifice its demands to those of home, of church, of country, of universal liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

"'Her husband, though unable to complain of any duty left undone, no lack of help when help was needed to sustain him (excepting when the requirements of this great aim intervened) her faithful husband yet felt that always between him and the chosen helpmeat of his life was this troublesome case — this irritating nerve-racking, maddening brain-devouring objective case. And she died as she has lived, brethren — died with a prayer on her lips, as befitted a woman of Christian character but a prayer that ended with a noun in the objective case governed by the preposition "of."'

"There! how's that for a funeral roaration to look forrard to?" and he grabbed me, drawed me close up to him on the sofy, and held my face up close to his. And I had to laugh. Sometimes I think that when he is making fun of me I love him the most of all.

But I was disapointed to find out I was n't pleasing him like I expected I would by improving my mind for that thought always made it easier for me.

"O little woman," he says, his arms close about me now, "if you knew how I yearn for your double negatives when I am among cold and grammatical strangers! No, you aint changing all this to make *me* happier, I can tell you that.

"Then if it can't be for you, dear, that I try to improve and make the very best of myself that I can, then" (and I turned my face a little away from him) "then let it be for another — for the one that 's on his way to us."

Then he knelt down before me like I had been a shrine.

PROVIDENCE, November 7.

MOTHER SPINNEY takes a lot of comfort sewing patchwork and making quilts and while she and I set asewing together she talks a good deal about Ed when he was a little boy and their life in Woppodentneck, Maine. But today when she was asorting over some old familiar pieces for a new quilt that was portions of the past (of long-gone-by dresses and aprons and sunbonnets and blouses) she seemed to be dwelling more than usual in the past. I often think it 's a pity that them that dwell so much in the past have to be paying house-rent in the present, more especially as its commonly the ones that find house-rent a burden that goes back to it the most.

I guess by what she tells me that he was always jest about the same hand to joke as he is now. She says she recollecks once he

did n't get home from school when he 'd ought to and she put on her bunnet and went to see what it was about. The school-teacher told her she had kep him after school to learn over two words he 'd missed in the spelling-lesson and she told her what ones they was. They wan't hard words — that is, according to lenth, though kind of mixing as you might say, and his mother says, " Edward, I 'm supprized at you — sech simple words, too."

" I 'm more than supprized, Mother," he says from his impriserment in the back seat, " I 'm spell-bound."

" He was a first-rate speller," she says, " as a general thing but Annis was n't. (Annis was her daughter.)

" Once when there was going to be a great spelling-match we told her she must prime up because everybody in Washington County most would be there and it would be a terrible disgrace for her to go down on ' people,' or any sech thing as that. She 'd missed ' people ' the day before, leaving out the *o*."

That reminds me of what Ed said jest the other day about that word, but it wan't in regard to Annis because he never speaks of her. He was running down standard spelling jest to hear me stand up for it, I guess, and he says, " why is the appendix like the letter *o?* Because it has always been in people when there 's no need of it."

" Well," I says, (thinking of the *o* and the wholesome discipline the teaching of it occasioned) it don't do no harm as I know of and it does some folks a lot of good."

" That 's a doctor's view of it," he says.

But to go back to Mother Spinney's story. " Annis was sech a highty-tighty little thing," she went on, " full of life and fun and frolic that it was a job to get her down to anything, much less anything so dull and uninteresting as the spelling-book. She was so pretty the school-master, they said, could n't take his eyes offen her without he was obliged to, and so all the little fellers set as far away from her as they could because they knew then they

could cut up all they wanted to and he would n't see them. They 'd swap off their seats if they was in her visinity with the big boys that wanted to set near her. They was all mad over her and she could twirl them round her thumb same as she could her brother to home. I used to say I wish Annis did n't have quite so many beauxs but in my heart I guess I was pretty proud of the attentions she got, and I would add, ' Well, there 's safety in numbers.'

" ' Then Nan 's almighty safe,' her brother would say.

" Well, between us we got her to master phthisic and Deuteronomy and don't you believe, as luck would have it (and luck always held the best there was for Annis) them was the only hard words that come to her and she was among the very last to remain standing. Even then the school-master said she was everdently confused or she would n't have went down on sech a simple word as she did. And the next evening what did he do but come up

to the house and presented her with an extry prize to make it up to her."

"That was awfull kind in him."

"Yes, wan't it? He said he had n't much doubt any way but he was the one to blame for her missing that word seeing he 'd got kind of hoarced up giving them out so long and not speaking it off distinck."

"What was the prize? a Bible or a book of poetry? Them 's what they give down to Chictooset for spelling-prizes."

"No, this was differant from the common run of things, on account, I expect, of him knowing jest who he was apicking it out for. Bibles and poetry books is broad and vaig, as you might say, and this was individooal."

"That 's so," I says, "about the same differance as there is between an unbrella and a hat — where you descend from the general to the particular."

"The prize the school-master brought was a pretty red 'cloud' sech as you recolleck they used to wear for a hood and scarf combinated

in them days that had white silky tossels on the ends."

Here Mother Spinney laughed as she often does over some redicklous recollection and says, "Once when my husband's sister and her big fambly from Montana was avisiting us we had to double up and tribble up at night because the house was small and most anything we come acrost we had to make believe was bedclothes for the time being. Yes, our house was pretty little but it was the kind that could stretch and I 'd ruther have that kind than Adelaide Emery's mansion up on the hill that was sech a loose fit for Adelaide and the hired girl.

"Well, one night after we 'd all retired — no I don't spose I 'd ought to say retired, because retiring means rising up at the evening's close and taking your lamp after bidding the folks good-night in a polite way that you don't expect to see again till each one gethers around the breakfast table, and seaking the reclusion of your own apartment. That 's retiring but

what we done when Sister Luphelia was with us was as different from that as night is like day."

Mother Spinney is kind of rambling by spells and wanders away from her subjeck. She 'd started out to tell me about Annis's prize and here she was passing out a long definition, and a definition of a word at that that she 'd started in to say wan't the right one to use. I felt like saying ' Are you Noah Webster or are you Mother Spinney? ' but I did n't. She could recite off a whole dictionary if she had a mind to and I would n't complain — because she was Ed's mother.

Sis is awfull strong on self-made defferni-tions. Bub was reading the other evening and he asked Sis what an exstinkt animal was. " It 's one that 's ben dead a long time," says she, " and smells bad," without stopping a minute to think.

" Well," he says, " there 's an exstinkt ani-mal in Tortrum's back yard and I think it 's a cat."

At last Mother Spinney got back to her tex and she went on: " After we 'd got settled for the night (I had 3 of the children with me and each one had a cooky and I did n't mind the 3 children as much I did the 3 cookies because laying on crumbs is far from pleasant)."

" Grammy," I interrupted, " you can't tell *me* nothing about sleeping on cooky crumbs."

" Jest then Edward Joseph hollered out from the bed we 'd impoverished for him on the kitchen floor, ' Mother, what 's this durned thing you 've got under my head? '

" It 's Annis's cloud, dear. Why?" "' Maybe it is a cloud by day,' he says, ' but by night it 's a pillar of fire.' "

" How pretty Annis looked in that cloud! ' You can put it on, if you like,' she said to the school-master when he 'd brought it and she 'd laughed in glee over the pretty thing. And she came and stood before him, her bright, sarcy little face looking up so tantalizing into his, her eyes adancing and her red lips parted. If he liked! O how slow and tender

he wound the soft wool round the curly head and the slim white throat. He was nothing but a big bashfull boy himself and I could see his hand atremling when he tied the gnot under her chin. Them honest eyes of his looked down as if he was adoring her but law, she did n't care the snap of your finger for him.

" Yes, Annis's lips was most always parted showing the pretty little white teeth between owing to her having sech a short upper lip. Her father used to say when she was a tiny thing, ' I have to kiss the baby twice at once for both lips don't get it at the same time, and I guess through her short life she always got 2 kisses to anybody else's one. For all she was so little she could draw herself up and make you seem awful little and no account — so one of her beauxs used to say — and it was having the short upper lip and the look she could put into her eyes to match it that made her able to do it. I wish you could see her the night the Village Drematic Club put on Queen Esther to shingle the school-house and put in new under pinning.

There never was anything like it. So much so that it was repeated twice, and folks come from all around to see it and the paper said, 'This queen was more than queen in her splendid scorn and her vivvid beauty.' Her dress was white and silver gauze with a low neck and an awful long train and white satin high-heeled shoes. Ed had got some dress-goods cheap of a travelling-man that was shop-worn and not being salable anyway, people in Maine not being given to gauziness as a general thing in any sence. Mis' Wolcott helped her make the dress and rigged her up in it and lent her the fancy shoes. I guess likely you 've heard me speak of Mis' Wolcott. She was Capten Wolcott's wife of the navy that was there for a spell for her husband's health and him and his wife took a great shine to Annis.

"She was a lovely lady, but poor woman! she had her troubles like the rest of us. There was a good-for-nothing-brother — Malcolm Treverton, his name was — ahanging round and living on them most of the time.

Handsome as a picter he was, and had a way with him so he could get most anything he wanted from folks by his pretty speaches. But no principle and all the time running the poor Cappen and his wife in debt something terrable. Yes, he was an awfull trial but no one never heard her complain. She was too proud for that. And by the way she 'd say, 'My brother, Mr. Treverton,' you 'd think he was the angell Gabriel or one of the selectmen.

Well, Annis done her a lot of good she was so bright and lively and jest about lived to their cottage when they was agetting ready for the play. If she stayed late in the evening the Cappen was always nice and polite and would see her home, Edward Joseph not being here to home to go for her (he was working up in the woods that winter). But I guess she got kind of tired of them and after the play she stopped agoing there. She wan't much more than a child and child-like she soon tired of most anything. I got the silver gauze laid away now.

I 've always been sorry it was too thin to put into a quilt."

Ed says his mother would put into a quilt anything and everything she could even to her immortal soul.

" How did the play pass off? " I asked her.

" Beautiful, all but where the school-master forgot his part when the Queen came on. But nobody wondered and nobody blamed him. The whole ordinance jest gave one low ' Oh. ' when they saw her.

" But she did n't look prettier to her mother that night than she did in the red cloud she 'd earned with her phthisic and her Deuteronomy. Her hair looked so black and kinky as it showed under the bright wool and her cheeks was jest the same color. I don't want no prettier picter to carry with me till life is done or memory dies than that little girl of mine on a clear winter's morning adarting down over the snowy hill on her brother's double-runner. Her happy face was alooking back at me, as I stood by the winder all aglowing and framed in the

red cloud, and the bright ends was aflying out like the red wings of a bird.

" The school-master used to say Annis reminded him of a troppicle bird but she seamed to remind him of most anything that was all life or color or gladness. Edward Joseph says there was very excellent material in that feller to make a fool of himself if he felt so inclined. But he did n't reely mean it. He liked him, I know.

" Speaking of Annis, Jennie, when are we agoing to get to planning and cutting out that red and white dress of hers for the sofy affighan? Edward Joseph can't bear to see anything of hers round but I guess he wont reckernize this considering he aint seen it for eighteen years. He went without the new overcoat that winter that he 'd been planning on for two years, to buy the dress for her and pay her way to singing and dancing-school. His old one was dreadful shabby and faded ('t was one over from his father) but he could n't refuse her when she asked him. He never could

refuse her anything. He was more like a father than a brother to her even before he 'd growed up. As a boy he spent half his time hunting her up when she 'd run away, and most always he 'd find her in somebody's house that would be standing round her in a circle alistening and alaughing at her little songs and peices. And often they would say, ' Why, your mother wan't worried about her, was she? she told us her mother said she could stay till we took her home. ' The little rogue ! "

I did n't say nothing to interrupt Mother Spinney for it done her good to live over again these old times and I guess she jest about forgot that I was there anyway. " Then she used to like to play in the rocks down by the river," she went on, " with some neighbor's children named Kittery that we did n't want nothing to do with, on account of him being in jail and the rest of the family in proportion. Quite frequant she 'd stay there till it was too dark to come home alone and then she 'd holler for her brother to come for her. ' Teddy Joe.

Teddy Joe!' she 'd call, and he 'd run down and take aholt of her hand and help her over the rocks home."

"What a care she was to him!"

"Yes, she was always a care — always a care," and the poor dim eyes seemed to be looking only into the past — "but it liked to kill Edward Joseph and me when that care was over.

"When he come home that day four days after she had went away, as soon as I looked into his face I knew it was Annis.

"'Is she dead?' I says.

"His face was like death and his words seamed to choke him when he said, 'Yes, she 's dead.'

"I was sick a long time after that and I ain't ever ben well since and as for Edward Joseph his greaf was so deap he can't stand it to hear her name mentioned even now. I never speak it because I know it hurts him so and that 's why it 's sech a comfort to have you to talk about her to. I hope I ain't atiring of you out."

"No, no, Mother; tell me more," I says as I laid the patches I 'd peaced together into her basket. "I don't see how people bears sech sorrers as that."

"I guess it would n't have been so hard if she had come and bid me goodby before she went but you know what she said in the letter I 've showed you so many times, that it was agoing to be too hard for her to do that and it might make her lose her courage about leaving us. I had to cry where she said she did n't want to be a burden to Teddy Joe no longer (a burden!) and wanted to strike out and earn her own living. She was agoing to start for Europe that very day, she said, and be a companion to a friend of Mis' Wolcott's and it would n't be long before she come back with beautifull presants for us both, 'and I 'll think of you and love you every minute I 'm away — you and Teddy Joe has ben so good to me,' was how she wound up. I 've know that letter by heart ever since I read it first. To the girls that was always jealous of her and

said she would take the last crust from our mouths to deck herself out with, to them girls I showed that letter and they looked oh ! so pitying at me and had n't a word to say.

" And I did n't have the comfort of a grave to go to her being drownded as she was and the body (oh! how awful that word sounds to a mother) the body never being found."

She 'd dropped her work now and the busy old fingers was alaying idle in her lap. " But I used to carry great heaps of the bright red flowers she 'd loved and laid them on a spot beside her father's and I made believe that was her grave. I told Edward Joseph I wanted him to have a stone raised there when he felt able with her name on it. He promised me but it ain't there yet. I know what he 's awaiting for, though. He 's awaiting till he can get a splendid one for her — one that 's taller and whiter than all the others there. That 's Edward Joseph.

" I used to see other mothers that had lost children up in the cemetery.

" One had died that was jest the age of Annis and one of her playmates. And her mother when she saw me at the grave that was n't Annis's at all would look and speak pitying to me and I 'd hear her say to her husband as she stood with him where their own child was alaying, ' O poor Lois Spinney! poor soul! poor soul.'

" It shows what consolation there is in jest a grave."

I looked up into the patient, care-lined face but there wan't a tear there. It looked like the face had outlived all its tears.

" Was it this time that Ed give up business there and come to the citty? " I asked her.

" Yes, and I 've always felt it was because he could n't bear to stay where everything reminded him of the sister he 'd worshipped and lost. It was jest the contrary with me. It seamed as if I could n't ever tear myself away from the place so full of precious memmeries. He never let on, though, that that was the reason and one day he says, ' Mother, taint no

use me trying any longer to make a living in that store. Taint like being in the citty where you can carry everything on on a cash basiss.' "

And that 's true enough. I 've heard Ed myself talk enough about that. You can't dun folks for money that you know aint got it and no way of getting it on account of all hands being sick and not able to work. And then in the citty it 's all right to keep asending bills to people that is slow about paying (slow being a mild term much in faver) but in the town where you was born and raised how are you going to send a bill for the 3rd or 4th time to anybody that comes in and says, " Edward, I jest ben in to see your mother, and I prayed with her, and I feel free to say she is in a state of sanctifying grace. She appears to feel the impelling foarce of the sperrit to a marked and onusual degree. I got the greatest hopes of your mother, Edward."

Of course you tear up the bill thinking anyone like that will soon call to mind the others that has accumalated. But do they?

Then how are you going to be mean enough to remind a woman of her grossery bill that walks in and says,

" Give me a packedge of sinnomon, I 'm using an awful sight of spice this week on account of it being my pickling and putting-up week. I jest took a jar of my new-made chow-chow into your mother, Ed, and she was tickled enough over it. She said, and she always has said, that my chow-chow is the only chow-chow where the sinnomon flavor stood out distinck and seamed to dominate (as you might say) its sister flavers. I hove in a lot of extry sinnomon having that very thing in mind."

(I don't know as this language was hers. It sounds more like Ed's but it 's the way he told it.)

What are you agoing to do? You are agoing to say, " Well, I take that very kind of you," and furthermore than that you are agoing to add, " Look here ! I aint agoing to charge this sinnomon up to you," and you stick to it even after she 's said, " Yes you be, too, Ed

Spinney. Think I 'm going to let you *give* it to me? What do you take me for? "

And here the conversation has to stop for you dont darst to tell her *what* you think of her, seeing you have to be carefull of your language before ladys.

Then their name is legion (as well as Kittery and Gooch and Hitchcock) that slops in and says, " Jest pass me out a couple of white spools of thread number 40 or 50 (or a string of herring or a plug of tobacker) and I 'll come in in the mornin' and pay yer. I aint got the change with me."

Anybody would say you was meaner than git-out to send in a bill for sech a trifle, but a trifle from the biggest part of the poppleation means something in the run of a year, especially as he had to send on cash for the goods.

Some winters when trade was the worst, he told me, he 'd shut up his store and go up in the woods to work in the logging-camps in order to get enough to take care of the fambly and to stock up in the spring. And sometimes middle

of summer he 'd shut up again and work in the lumber mills a spell till trade breezed up a little in the fall.

A stranger asked him once if there was sech a thing as a periodical store in town.

" Well," he says, kind of rueful, " I guess mine comes about as near to one as any."

" And do you keep stationary? " he inquired.

" O no! I can't keep that way. I have to hustle round pretty lively or we 'd starve."

His mother referring about them experiences of his to-day says, " He never lost heart while Annis lived but after that his courage seemed all gone. You aint ever ben a mother, Jennie, and so you can't know what it was to me to see Edward Joseph taking down the sign

E. J. Spinney,
Dry Goods and Groceries.

that he 'd put up with so much pride and hope only a few years before. He 'd gilded the letters himself to save expense and he and I was awfull proud of it. Annis was a little thing then

but she was proud of it, too, and she used to point at it to her little playmates and say, "Look at our name up there all in shining gold."

"But it was blackened and tarnished when he took it down.

"It produced considdable excitement him putting it up, on account of new stores not being opened up very often in a town like ours. There was quite a gang of men and boys ahanging round and watching him as there always is at sech times and they was grouped around the ladder when he went up it and kep heaving out advice about how to fasten the sign up and about how the position of it had ought to be. Edward Joseph knew that 'bout all they was awaiting for was the cigars he was agoing to treat with afterwards but he was in sech high sperrits, he tried to take advice from everybody even when they conflictuated and jest as he 'd got in the last nail and was about to come down the ladder he pointed up to the sign like a play-actor like this (and she raised her arm up high) and

said in a loud voice, 'In hock signo vinchy,' which is in the back of the spelling book and means 'In this sign conquer!'"

My poor brave boy! O Ed, I says to myself, "I want to comfort you for all you've ben through. It seems as if I could n't wait for you to get home. But I aint telepathing for you to come, dear. I aint so selfish as that.

There 's a lot of sympathy give out for the great disapointments and defeats in histerry sech as Napoleon getting beat at Water Loo, and the arkangel Patrick being drove down out of Heaven. And I ain't saying that it was very plessant for any one of them. But to me the most pityful of all is off in that little scraggly town in Maine poor Ed Spinney ataking down his sign.

NOVEMBER 16th.

ED come home to-night when I was wripping up the red and white dress. "Put that away!" he says. I never thought he could be so stern. "Put that away! I don't want my wife to touch it!"

DECEMBER the 9th.

ITS the middle of the night and the storm is raging so that the house is arocking in the wind. I cant sleep. Ed is asleep and thinks I am too, but I cant close by eyes with what I have got on my mind. I am agoing to write even if I tear it all up afterwards, because maybe it will carm and steady me.

She came to-night when Grammy 'd gone to bed and I was alone — did this poor sick haggerd woman. I heard a faint gnock to the back door and when I opened it there she stood aleaning against the jam, and when she looked at me with her great holler eyes and tryed to speak she was took with a spell of coughing so she couldent mutter a word. I took aholt of her hands very gentle and drawed her into the warm kitchen into Grammy's big rocker close to the stove. Even after she 'd took a drink

of water and stoped coughing it seamed as if she couldent speak. At last she looked up at me and says, "Are you Ted's wife?"

"Yes," I says.

"I 'm Annis," she says. "I 'm his sister, and I 've come a long ways to see him — jest to bid him good-by."

"Annis!" I cried, "His little sister Annis! O where have you been and why have n't you come before?" And I took aholt of both her cold hands and kissed her.

"I 've been close round here for most a week but I aint had the currage to come — and I felt as if I was as far away from Ted as if I was on the other side of the world. But to-night I couldent keep away" — her eyes aroving wistfully round — "I could n't keep away."

I was down on my gnees before her then and trying to take off her things, but she drawed her shawl acrost her and says, "No, I 'm afraid he wont speak to me. He wrote me I must never try to find him — that I 'd give Mother

her death blow and he never wanted to see me again. He 'd turn me outdoors."

"Aint you ashamed!" I cried. "Aint you ashamed to say sech things about Ed Spinney! Ed Spinney with his great big heart that cant bear to see a pin stuck through a buttarfly — let alone a weak, frail woman. O Annis!" I says, a-putting my arms around her, "You dont know how glad he 'll be to see you. Jest you wait till he comes and see! Jest you wait and see! Why he 'd never forgive me if I let you go away on a night like this!"

"I been ahoping," she says, kind of hesitating, "that he 'd forgive all I done and would bid me good-by. That 's why I come. I know if he wouldent forgive me God never will, for nobody could ever be more good and kind than Teddy Jo."

She was sipping some ginger tea I 'd fixed up for her and she says, looking over the cup a little more hopefull,

"When Ted talks about me does he speak as if he would welcome me if I ever come here?"

" He aint ever said he wouldent," I answered.

" Has he ever told you of any messidge Mother left for me when she was adying — any message about forgiving me — for all I 'd run away and broke her heart? "

" Annis," I says, " your mother never knew you run away. She believed all you wrote in your lettar and she had nothing but loving words for you and was oh! so proud of your memory."

She gapsed a little at this and says, " How good he was to keep it from her! How good he was — to her! "

" Now, Annis, little sister," I says, " you come right into my bedroom and lay down on the bed till you feel stronger." I planned to break it to her and her mother in the morning that they was still alive. But as I looked at her it come to me the picture Grammy 'd carryed in her mind so long, of her little girl in her bright beauty asliding down the snowy hill and I couldent help wishing this shock had been spaired her.

But Annis says, " No, let me stay here while you ask Ted if he could ever welcome me if I come to his house."

Jest then I heard Ed's key in the lock and I had to consent to her plan, little as I liked it. I knew that jest the sight of his sister, sick and suffering, would melt his heart quicker than any words of mine.

" Now I like this kind of a club-life," Ed says, as I helped him off with his overcoat and brought his dressing-gown and slippers, " where they 're satisfied with tips like this," and he kissed me. " A club of 2 is about the right size, seems to me," and he settled himself in the big chair and presently began to read the paper out loud.

I took up my sewing (one of the teenty dresses) and when I 'd got up currage to do it I says, " Ed, dear, I been thinking to-night about Annis."

He started. That name had n't ever been mentioned between us before.

" I been athinking," I went on with all the

currage I could, " I been athinking that perhaps she 's still aliving."

" I know she 's still aliving."

" O Ed ! and maybe she 's sick or destituted. Hadent we ought to hunt her up, now we 're so happy ourselves in this beautiful home? "

" No, she 's neither poor nor sick. Trust her to get and keep all the soft things of life. She 's sent Mother presents fit for a queen that I 've burned. At last she thought Mother was dead and stoped asending. I told her never to write to me again — that I was done with her. How could I forget all the sorrer she 'd brought on her old Mother? "

" Was it all on your mother's account? " I darsted to say. " Want your pride humbled and want it that made you suffer most? "

" Jennie," he says, " you dont know what it is to be tryed as I 've been tryed. Nothing like this has ever come into your life, so you mustent jedge me. You don't know nothing about disgrace."

" Ed," I says, " you shair your mother with

me with all her goodness and sweetness. If there is any disgrace about your sister I want to shair that too. O let me be truly your wife. Let me share with you in everything!"

"Never in this," he says.

"Ed dear, dont you love me?" Alaying my hand on his shoulder.

"I love you and I respect you too deeply, my wife," he answers, "to bring any shadder of shame into your life. I have no sister now. If you love me you will remember that."

I heard a low moan. It come from the kitchen where I knew I 'd shut the door. She 'd unlatched it softly, poor soul! and had heard what was said. I went into the kitchen quick and shut the door behind me. A strong gust of wind from out-doors blew into my face. The outside door was wide open, the snow was awhirling in — and Annis was gone.

I rushed out. The storm was raging with great fury and the snow almost blinded me. I run down the steps and along the street a-hollering, "Annis! Annis! come back! O

come back!" but there want no answer and if I saw her at all it was jest a dark figger in the distance in the whirling snow that might be her, and then it disappeared.

When I come back into the house, Ed was jest acoming into the kitchen and when he sees me all covered with snow and trembling, he draws me up to the stove and brushes the snow off of my hair and dress and says:

"You little goose! alwers doing other people's work! What odds does it make if the milk-cans do blow over into the snow. Let the milkman find his own cans in the morning. I can't let my wife get chilled like this."

Worst of all was me having a secret from him. I thought of Lyddy Rogers and the lie she 'd told her father about the money to make his last days days of peace and I was glad I 'd never jedged her. I knew now jest how she felt about deceiving him even if it was to prevent him suffering and I 'd give all I 've got in the world to-night if I could say, "It want the milk cans, Ed; it was Annis."

DECEMBER the 14th.

TO-DAY was Annis's funerell.

I must go back to that terrible night when I had my first secret from Ed (my only secret from him as long as we live — I know that now) and I set up all night aworrying about her. I wisht I 'd had more faith in the Father and had n't worryed at all. I aint ever going to doubt his love and care again — never!

Next day I was sent for to go to the hospittle quick as I could as a woman there wished to see me. I knew who it must be but I only told Mame a woman at the hospittle had sent for me (and there was two I was avisiting there straight along, she did n't think nothing of it), and as it was Saturday and Ed might be home early, to tell him where I 'd gone. I packed a small basket with daintys and was jest astarting out when Grammy was took with a sinking spell. I did n't darst to leave her and

you can guess how I felt, not knowing which one was most likely to be took away that very day — Annis or her mother — and both neading me and depending on me.

Granny's health has settled down as good as you could expect for any one her years and all the sickness she 's passed through. Soon after she came she says to me one day very grave, " Jennie, I got something to tell you that you must n't tell Edward Joseph on account of it being an unplessant disapointment and surprise if he ever got wind of it. It 's something," she says, " that he thinks is so but it aint. And he 's so proud of it and I 've heard him kind of braging on it that I 've about made up my mind I would n't tell him."

" What is it, Granny? "

" It is, Jennie," (very sollem) " that my appendicks aint there."

" You don't say! But they was n't any good to you, was they? "

" No, it aint that. Even the most thrifty aint found a use for appendicks yet, I guess.

It aint that. But its on account of Edward Joseph being so proud of me aholding on to them all this time."

"'My mother's been an invalid most 19 years,' I've heard him say, more than once 'and she has underwent many various kinds of operations from first to last, but among them all she's kep her appendicks intack.'

"But I aint. They told me last time I was operated on that they'd took the liberty to remove 'em."

And Ed is right. It is remarkable now if anybody reaches an advancitated age and maniging to keep their appendicks to the end. Last month a smart healthy young feller in the office had to have his appendicks removed and Ed was chose by the company to fill the vacancy.

But all we've got to worry about now is her heart and there aint nothing to do for that when it dont act but jest to keep her quiet and give her her medisen, hoping it wont prove fatal, though thinking it probbably will.

It seems (but I didn't know this till after-

wards) that while I was with Granny in her bed-room with the door shut so to keep out every sound — I knew all anybody could do for her was to keep her quiet and give her her drops — it seems Mame saw Ed acoming in and she give him my message, adding as she saw the basket in the entry all packed, " But I guess she forgot her basket."

" I 'll take it there," says Ed, " and then I can walk home with her."

And he grabed up the basket and went off with that gay whistle of his, aswinging it round so that Mame said she was afraid the jelly 'd all spill out of it.

Mrs. Tortrum was in Mame 's at the time and she says as she see him amarching gayly off, " Aint he the most tickled man you ever see to do anything for Jennie! "

But he want awhistling when he come back. Grammy had revived up and I was jest agoing to ask Mame to set with her while I went to the hospittle when he come in. It did n't sound like his step, but it was him. When I looked

at his face I knew something terrible had happened.

"Ed, Ed!" I cried, "What is it? Have you been hurt?"

"Annis is dead," he says, as he sunk into a chair. "Annis is dead, and it was me closed her eyes. I aint deserved it but God let me do that — he let me close her eyes." He shuddered, and then he says, "I took your basket to the hospittle because I thought you 'd gone there and forgot it. I was alooking for you in the ward when this poor miserable woman that I did n't know held out her arms to me as she laid in her bed and cries, 'O Ted, Ted! I knew you 'd come! I knew you 'd come!'

"I could n't believe it was Annis — but there was the short upper lip — all the pretty white teeth gone — and a little wave still in the hair that had grown so thin and gray.

"I set down beside her and the tears blinded me so I could hardly see, and I told her she must n't talk, but I would stay right there with her till she felt stronger.

" ' Dont ever leave me, Ted,' " she says. " ' Dont leave me till — till it 's all over.' "

" And I did n't. The nurse said it would be better for her to tell what was on her mind, and so between faint gasps — she was awful weak — she told all her sad story. I can't go over it now, Wife, but you shall hear it as soon as I can bear to repeat it.

" She sent love and good-by to you, and she said she was glad I had sech a wife that would make up to me for all she 'd made me suffer. *Me* suffer! It 's her that 's been made to suffer beyond anything I can ever know — my poor, pretty little sister! "

When he could controle his voice he went on,

" After that she sank into a stuper, and I set there aholding her hand and stroking back the poor hair, and then she kind of wandered off. ' Get out the sled for me, Teddy Jo, quick! ' she says sudden-like; ' I 'm agoing to steer it myself this morning.'

" The last thing she done was to raise her hand very feeble and to say, ' Take aholt of

my hand, Teddy Jo, it 's agrowin' so dark, and help me — over the rocks home — home.' "

Then he sunk his head on his arms on the table and shook with great sobs like I had n't ever see a man do before. And because his mother must n't know, I had to be mother and wife both to him and comfort him all I could.

DECEMBER 22th.

I AINT had time to write for a long time. I wouldent let Ed tell me Annis's story till he was able to go through it without breaking down. When he was calm enough he told it. Malcolm Treverton married her. Mrs. Walcott made him do that, threatening to cut off his allowance she give him if he did n't. They lived awhile in great lugsury but soon after her baby was born — " It was a little girl, Ted," she said, " and I named her for Mother " — soon after the baby was born he deserted her and after a few months he died. She learned then he 'd squandered all his fortune and then she started in to earn her living and the child's, too proud-sperrited to ask for any help. But she wan't very strong. When Mrs. Walcott see the little girl she took a great notion to her — saying she was like their folks — and she wanted her to go there for a vissit. She kep

her a long time and when the little thing went away again her Aunt was so lonesome without her she wanted her back, saying she would give her a good home and Annis could come as often as she wished to see her.

It jest about broke Annis's heart to part with her baby, but she loved the child better than she did herself and she couldent bear to refuse for her the home where she was surrounded by love as well as every comfort and care — especielly as her own health was so unserten, and so she give her up. I guess no one can ever guess what it cost her. She did n't vissit her offen (think of vissiting your own little child!) because it was sech torcher to leave her again. Little Lois jest woshipped her mother and her vissits was her hapiest times, so Annis had that one comfort.

Well, she struggled on alone till then, when the battle was over. But Mrs. Wolcott had jest died, the home was broke up, and Lois was with strangers.

" And oh Ted! " says Annis, " if you would

only let her live with you till she 's a little older! I would pass out happy if you would grant that! She 's a good girl. She would never give you the trouble her mother did."

"Annis," says Ed, "jest as long as ever we 've got a home it 's agoing to be your child's jest as much as it is ours."

She hove a long happy sigh. Then she says, "And your wife?"

"If you knew Jennie," he says, "you 'd know she 'd say the same thing — and she 'd say it first."

So we 've sent for Annis's daughter and she 's acoming to-morrer. Granny can't hardly wait till she gets here. She keeps atalking about her and awondering if she don 't look jest like her mother used to. And she watches the clock and says, "This time to-morrer she 'll be here, wont she?" And she 's got out her best black dress to meet her in.

I hope Grammy wont be disappointed. Little Lois has been brought up in a rich home and I guess she aint ever seen any plain-living people

to speak of. I hope she wont feel the differance too much.

We have fixed up jest as nice as we can, and Ed has hired a peanner for her. I know that 'll please her and there 's lots of little things we can get along without so we wont mind the extry expence. It 's a Katzen & Blimmer and it aint scratched up or mutilated hardly any but is in quite nice condition. The cheaf care is keaping the little boys away from it so it wont get more so.

I hope she can play the Java March.

PROVIDENCE, December 17.

LOIS has come.

What a wonderfull thing a human being would be to us if there wan't so many of them. If it was only given us to see a fresh one say every ten years I guess there 'd be as much interest in them, as a new mowing machine or wringer, comparing them with the few others we knew and watching what they 'd do and say.

We felt kind of like that about Lois. We been wondering if she would be little and pretty like her mother or cute and bright like Ed or handsome and fassenating and good-for-nothing like her father, or staitly and high-toned like her Aunt Wolcott, or jest plain good clear through like Granny or perhaps have a little dash of each one. But Ed said there 's no counting on sech things. He says it 's like uniting

various ellyments in a chemickle labartory where it makes something differant from anyone of them. "Now you take that metal sodium," he says, "and unite it with cloreen, a deadly pizen, what have you got? Is it something pizen or something hard? Taint neither one. It 's *salt* that we eat every day of our lives."

And it is jest as he said. The strong Spinney metal and the Malcolm Treverton pizen had prodooced our Lois, the salt of the earth. She is jest beautiful, tall and calm and sweet, and the kind that can be depended on every time from answering a letter to seeing that the vegetables don't boil dry. Mr. Oglevie, the minister, has seen her and he says, "Lois Treverton has got character and strenth in her face if there ever was one." She seems older than her 17 years because she 's so stayed and dignified. As soon as Mandy caught sight of her she run and put the best sugar-bowl on the table. She 's that kind. She brings out the best in your cubbard and the best in you. As for Bub and Gussy's

manners since she come they seem kind of unnatural they 're so improved. In room of coming into the house hooting and yelling and rampaging round they go and get their slippers same as they never would before. When Jim sees them adoing it he looks awful sorrerfull and worried and says, " I guess we aint agoing to have our little boys with us a great spell longer."

She got here a couple of hours before Ed come home from the office. He knew she 'd come but when this tall young woman in her heavy mourning entered the room and we said, " This is Annis's daughter," I know his heart was full to busting because all he could say was as he took the hand she held out to him, " Was you any carsick on your trip? "

We was all more or less in awe of her at first but that 's wearing away now that we 've found how happy she is to be with her own kin. She jest worshipped her mother and she says we can't ever know what it is to her to be aliving with her folks. She tells us it has always been

her plan ever since she was a dite of a thing to make a home for her mother and take care of her when she grew up and jest them two live together. She said there was always a coldness between her Aunt Wolcott and her mother. "And I think," she says to-day, "it was because no matter how much Aunt Anna did for me I always loved Mother best. If I 'd been Aunt Anna's own child she could n't have done more for me and it always made me a little unhappy that I did n't love her as she did me. O, how different it is being with my own dear mother's people. No fear ever about me loving you all enough." And she stole up gently to her uncle Ed and laid her cheek loving against his.

The two Loises is great friends. "Grandmother," she often says (she never calls her Granny like the rest of us) "Grandmother, tell me more about that pretty little mother of mine and all her conquests." which Granny is tickled enough to do, you may be sure. Then Lois loves to wait out on her, too. Yesterday

I heard Granny say to her, " Lois, run get my teeth. The minister 's acoming," jest as she 'd say it to me.

She can play the Java March. And furthermore than that she has got a lovely voice to sing.

PROVIDENCE, January 6.

PLESSANT.

Lois has started in going to Pembroke. It 's the same as Brown only, as Ed says, a little lighter shade of Brown.

He calls it Caffy O'Lay.

Her gardeen that lives in Philadelphy named Mr. Knapp advised her to go to Bryn Mawr but she would n't hear tell to leaving us. She 's awful fond of her books and I know she wont never be happy without she attaigns the very highest notch on the sea of life. She puts in to her studys like all possessed and there dont seem to be no limmit to her boundless ambition especielly in sciance.

Jim says he expects she 's already the whole shooting-match up there.

" Should n't wonder," says Ed, " seeing how she 's studying triggernometry."

PROVIDENCE, Jan. 20.

SPLENDIDEST day as ever was.

Had fryed scallops for supper. Enjoyed very much by all. Sis has took the shells to paint views on. Ed says she can't ever put sech a pretty view on them as what nacher did. Is very fond of scallops.

PROVIDENCE, Febuerry 4.

ANOTHER happy, happy day, more beautiful than any other yet. I don't see how I 'm going to mannage to be any more happy than what I am now, but yet I know I 'm agoing to be. I must pass around all I can of it — I know that.

Am still arassling with the grammar. Have come to parsing now. Make mistakes once and awhile. The hardest of all to coap with is the pronouns, it 's sech a job going back and finding out the antecedents to all of them.

It makes me think of the folks that 's alwers agoing back and hunting up their antecedents. Nouns stand on their own merits, as you might say, and you dont have to look back of 'em. I said something like this to Sis and I says, " Sis, through your life always be a noun."

Ed says folks in general is fond of digging up their ancestors unless they 're Mary Anncestors.

PROVIDENCE, Febuerry 4.

LATE this afternoon right in the midst of the shower a young Brown student came to see Lois and go over her lessons with her. He 'd got caught in the shower and his close was souching wet.

" Bring your friend, Lois," I called out, " right out here in the kitcen where he can dry his close." We had a good fire there as it 's been pretty chilly to-day and Granny and I was asewing carpet-rags. " Now you take your coat right off," I says, " and I 'll dry it by the stove and you take your feet and put them right here in the oven and dry them too. And I moved the bean-pot along so he could put his feet in. And Granny says, " Dear me. I hope you wont take no cold. A cold that 's took this season o' the year is more than apt to hang on the whole winter. But you look strong and rugged. I guess you 'll weather it through."

The young-man laughed. "I am strong and rugged," he says, and seemed awful pleased when Lois said he stood very high in athalettics. He 's a handsome young feller as ever was and a great hand to joke and laugh. What did he do after he 'd been there a spell but go to winding Granny's rag balls for her and was jest as nice and sochable as you 'd wish to see.

"Do you go to college?" Granny says.

"Yeh, senior at Brown."

"No," says Granny, "you aint ever seen me there because I aint ever been there. But I 'm agoing some day with Lois."

"You 're acoming with Miss Treverton to tea in my rooms, — that is, if you 'd like to. I wont forget to send you an invitation."

She told him she guessed she was getting along too much in years to go to sech things, but you could see how pleased she was at his soshible talk.

We was having sech a plessant time there round the stove that he did n't want to leave and asked Lois if she would n't make molasses

candy if he would help. So I got out the spider and set it on to boil. Lois aint much of a cook yet but we all helped and it came out first rate, and we worked it till the sticks was jest the color of Lois's hair.

No, Lois don't know much about cooking but she 's real set on it to learn. I let her make the bread once and it turned out sour. But when she said it had got to be throwed away Ed says, " No, don't do that. Let 's make lemonade of it."

And once when I went to the Woman's Releaf Core she got supper all herself. She did n't have very good luck with the things and there was n't much of them et. But Granny says,

" Never mind, dear, Benjamin Franklin says you must rize up from the table with as good an appertite as you set down."

" But how can you do that," says Ed, " when the stuff on the table takes your appertite away? "

By the time they was about through supper

(sech as it was) Lois found the baked potaters was done at last. She had n't put them in the oven soon enough and left the damper down at that, but now they was done and she fetched them on.

" It 's too soon after supper, thank you," says her uncle Ed. " I don't eat between meals." They was supposed to go with the cold beef, but he said that wan't nothing but a memery by that time.

Yes, he loves to plague her but she takes it very nice and she says she aint agoing to get discurraged.

The young feller's name is Dorr Edgerly and Granny says, " I wonder if you 're any relation to the Edgerlys down our way. I hope you aint because they was as mizzable a set as you 'd wish to see in a day's journey — no gumption and no sprawl — used to steal rides on the stage — never paid the minnister and even wanted to steal their way to Heaven."

Dorr throwed back his head and laughed and laughed and let the ball he was awinding

roll over the floor till it got unwound again and the cat was tangling herself up in it.

While Lois was astraightening things out (he was awatching her all the time — she done it so pretty and graceful) he asked for more detales about these possible kinspeople, as he called them. So Granny talked away while she sewed and I cut out. And before he thought of Lois's lessons again it was time to get supper. Of course we asked him to stay and he would n't go into the settin'-room like company at all but vowed he 'd help fry the potaters while Lois made the toast. She did n't make it very good. In the midst of it baby David who had toddled in fell against the stove and burnt himself cryed as loud as he could and I caught him up and give him a piece of the toast, first biting off the places that was burned. And Dorr talked to him and whistled to him till he forgot all about being hurt. He 's got an awfull nice way with children. That 's plain. Him and Ed had a good time at the table with their jokes. He set right acrost from Lois and by

the way he looked at her I guess he was athinking would n't it be nice if they could set that way in a home of their own. But there. Lois is too young to think of getting married yet. She 'll have to learn to cook first.

Well, in the evening they settled down at their books in good shape and got a lot of studying done. I don't know when I 've seen a young-feller I like as well as I do him and Granny the same.

PROVIDENCE, March 5.

LOIS has got something on her mind. She 's alosing all her pretty color and she don't eat scarcely anything. I 've asked her what it is and she says very gentle,

" It is nothing, Aunt Jennie. You need n't worry about me."

But it *is* something and Ed has begun to notice it, too. But what it is we can't either of us sense. She 's getting along beautifull in her studys. The professors are always giving her H. And she can't be mizzable over any love matter because all there is is Dorr Edgerly and it dont take a magnifying glass to see he 's jest crazy over her and she don't seem to care for him excep in a friendly way.

He comes here often now and we 're alwers glad to see him, he 's sech fine company, and makes himself to home jest like one of the fambly.

"Aunt Jennie," he says to me yesterday, "want to sew up this rip in my shoulder?"

Course I wanted to and he knew it and sewed two buttens on that was jest ahanging.

And if he feels like a ginger snap or a turnover he knows where to find one.

His mother must miss him pretty bad off there in New York.

PROVIDENCE, Mar. 10.

LOIS is more down than ever. She hardly talks at all excep when she sees we 're awatching her and then makes an efforte to cherk up. I been cooking up a lot of nice little things to temp her appertite and she is grateful and takes up her spoon or fork and tries to eat them. But you can see her heart aint in it.

Last night her uncle Ed was reading the paper out loud to us as he alwers does evenings and he 'd started in on a piece about some of the fellers up to Brown cribbing and you 'd think that would interest her, as bad as she 'd feel about it, but she riz up right in the middle of it and said she guessed she 'd go to bed.

Poor motherless girl! she 's asuffering and there 's no one to help her if her uncle Ed and I can't. I went into her room after she 'd gone to bed. She was alaying very still with her face to the wall but I knew she was n't asleep. Her

lovely, reddish-brown hair caught the light from my lamp and looked like red gold astreaming over the piller. I could n't see her face.

One of her soft white arms was flung out bare and was alaying acrost a mistake in the quilt that her mother made when she was a little thing. The pattern is Indian review and kind of a mixing pattern anyway for a child. Granny says for all she had the loveliest pieces for it that folks had give her, she got them together wrong. "And before I took notice of it," she says, "the folks at the bee quilted it in and it could n't be changed."

And there it is all quilted in, too late to be changed, but her child's white arm was covering it.

"Lois," I says very softly, "Lois, wont you tell Aunt Jennie what 's on your mind? Or if you 'd ruther not tell aint there some way she can help you without knowing what it 's about?"

She give a quick deep sob but she did n't turn her head.

"No, Aunt Jennie," she says at last. "You can't help me."

So I drawed the quilt up over her arm and neck and jest patted her kind of loving and come away.

PROVIDENCE, March 15.

THAT cribbing has made a lot of excitement and the ten boys that done it have been expelled. We can see Lois feels bad enough over it even when she 's so low over something else. She does not talk about it and seems to change the subjeck if it is mentioned.

Dorr Edgerly called this evening and brought her some roses but she had gone to her room and he did n't see her. My! If he did n't look disappointed. Ed has heard down town that his folks is very rich and ristocrattic in New York. But Ed says they aint any more ristocrattic than the Trevertons in Philadelphia, that he knows.

Lois's Aunt Walcott tried to fetch her up to be proud of her Treverton blood, but she could n't ever imbue her in any sech notion. It want born in her to have any sech feelings. And I guess it wan't in Dorr either. He was so much amused in hearing about the Edgerlys

down in Maine that Granny told about that he often says, when he dont feel like work,

" Well, Granny, I 'm afeeling that Edgerly lack of sprawl to-night. It 's agetting more and more into my veins."

And Granny really looks worried about him till I tell her he 's only afooling.

PROVIDENCE, March 21.

PROFESSOR ENGARDE of Brown was here this afternoon. He 's a tall and awfull distinguished looking gentleman dressed in a black suit about 35 years old. He 's a great scollar that has wrote a lot of books on science. And they say he 's making a great name for himself. When he said he would like to see Miss Treverton and give me his card I told him to step right into the parlor. And I give him the postal-card album to look at while he was awaiting.

When I told Lois he was there she looked kind of startled and says, " O I can't see him, Aunt Jennie. I can't."

But when I asked what I should tell him she thought better of it and says, " Yes, yes, I will see him. Tell him I 'll be down

direckly." So I told him she 'd be down immediately if not sooner.

But she wan't down direckly nor for quite a spell after that. He had time to look the album through a dozen times and I wisht Granny's was there too so he could look at that, too.

At last she come down, even whiter than she has been before lately and after speaking to him set down near the dining-room door where I set with the stockings which she left wide open, though he set where he could n't see me — or me him.

" Miss Treverton," he begun, " I have come upon an unpleasant errand. I have come to say that I must ask to be released from a promise I have made to you. I find I cannot reconcile it with my idea of right."

" And you are going to break your word? "

" I am." (I could hear the regret in his tones.)

" You are going to expose Dorr Edgerly? "

" I am going to cease shealding him. I am

very cruelly placed. Perhaps you will not believe that I am giving myself much pain in inflicting this pain upon him — and you."

"Why, then, do you do it? Is the truth being found out?"

"It is not. Unless I speak it will never be found out. As I say, it is only my sense of what is right. I find I cannot allow myself to sheald one who is as guilty as the others who are suffering punishment and disgrace. I cannot hope that it will lighten the blow for you to say that I would suffer a great deal to spare you both this — yet I have come to say it."

"Then why did you give the promise first?"

I had n't ever heard Lois speak so cold.

"Because it was you who asked it. I knew how deep a regard Mr. Edgerly has for you, and it came to me that perhaps if I broke silence in this matter it might be the means of his losing you. I do not wish to trouble you with my personal affairs but I will say that

once when I was even younger than he, I had as tender a regard for a beautiful girl whom I could not win. My life has been very different from what it might have been because of that early disappointment."

"You have been very successful. You have n't missed any inspiration she would have given."

"Yes, success has come to me — success of a certain kind, but that does n't mean much if you cannot share it — if there is no one particularly close to you to whom it would be success as well. It sounds trite and artificial, I know, but I feel that I should have preferred failure — with her." He paused and then went on. "And so I tried not to cast such a shadow upon another's life. I have always liked Edgerly. My impulse was not to spoil his life for him when you came and interceded for him."

Lois had taken one of Dorr's roses from the vase on the table beside her and was absently

pulling it to pieces. The pretty red pettles was scattered over her lap.

He broke the silence.

"Would you prefer," he said, "that I say to Mr. Edgerly that the truth must be told and give him the chance to confess? Would that be less painful for you?"

"For *me?*"

"For you both."

"You will do whatever is wisest, I am sure, Mr. Engarde."

There was disappointment in his voice when he said, "Then there is nothing more to say?"

"Nothing, I think."

But he seemed to want to linger round and he spoke about her studys and praised her work though she did n't show much interest.

Then he says, "Is that one of Mr. Edgerly's roses, Miss Treverton, that you are tearing to pieces?" and when she answered that it was he says, "I would n't be so cruel to anything so beautiful."

She raised her lovely eyes to him then.

"You seem to have great pity — for roses," she said.

Then he riz up and held out his hand as he said good-by, but she was alooking down on the bare seed-vessel on the rose's stalk and did n't see it.

"Good-by," she said.

And then he went away.

Lois came out to me her eyes ashining.

"O I 'm so glad, so glad, so glad!"

"*Glad?*"

"Yes. For me he was agoing to do something mean — I know it would be the first meanness of his life. O it was so dreadful, Aunt Jennie. You know a woman had ought to inspire a man to high and noble things and I was drawring him down to a lower standard — or I *thought* I was. I ought to have *known* I could n't."

"But what made you ask him to do what you did n't want him to do?"

"Because it was the only way I could see to help Dorr and I felt so sorry for him. I am very fond of Dorr. But he was n't worth *that*. There is n't anybody or anything in the whole world that could ever be worth *that!*"

Dear child! I wonder if I don't know her secret now.

PROVIDENCE, March 23.

DARK and cloudy with considdable humility in the air.

In this morning's paper was more big headlines.

Prominent and Wealthy Student at Brown confesses to Cribbing. Promptly expelled etc.

And poor Dorr, very much ashamed, come to bid us good-by. Granny did n't know what he was agoing for, thinking it was fambly reasons and she says,

" Find out if you can if your folks is any relation to them down-east Edgerlys. It would make you seem nearer to us — I vow but what it would, mizzable and shiftless as they was."

He reely laughed at that, though not exackly same as he 's laughed before.

" That down-east branch would n't own me," he says.

" I hope you 'll do something to make every single Edgerly there is proud of you," says Granny, looking up from tying the package she was adoing up for him.

He looked awful sober at that and then he says, all of a sudden,

" Yes, Granny, I vow I will if it 's a possible thing — and it aint too late," he added in a tone too low for her to ketch.

Then he shook hands all round without speaking a word, but the look he give Lois meant more than any words.

As for us we could n't feel much worse if he belonged to us.

PROVIDENCE, March 24, 5 P. M.

As pretty a snow storm as ever I saw though late in the season, so calm and soft and still and the flakes so big you can pick a single one out in the air and watch where its agoing to light same as if it was a bird. And the houses and the streets and everything it covers is jest beautiful. Lois is asetting by the winder and looking out at it. She 's awearing one of her pretty, soft white woolen house dresses and the thought comes to me as she sets there, her young face close to the winder looking so thoughtful out that the snow might look in at whiteness as white as its own self.

She 's been to home all day because she has took a cold and I would n't let her go up to the colledge. She 's been astudying but now she 's stopped and she makes sech a lovely picture asetting there that I have to keep alooking up from my writing to take a look at her.

It seems a pitty there aint any one but jest me to see sech prettyness. I expeck it comes from a feeling that young girl beauty and freshness aint so very differant from the snow-flakes — it 's so transitive. The snow-flake has a minute and you can give the other 6 years, but one way you look at it 6 years seems a minute in a long life.

I 've heard it said that a woman can become an angel but she can't ever be a girl again.

The same Date. Evening.

After I 'd stopped writing and Lois and I had set silent in the twilight for a little spell, she says very slow, and almost as if she was atalking to her-self.

" I wonder what she was like — the girl that Professor Engarde loved. What could she have been not to have loved him in return? I wish he had told me something about her."

" You did n't give him no encuragement to," I reminded her. " I did n't know, Lois, that

you could be so cold and distant as you was to him. I don't know as you was exackly polite. I guess he felt it."

"O Aunty, do you think that? Do you think he 'd care whether *I* showed any interest or not? I feel so insinigificant before him."

"You did n't look insinigifant. You looked like a young queen — so tall and beautiful and proud!"

"With my copper crown," she laughed. She never can see any good looks in her copper-colored hair. "But *do* you think I was n't cordial enough? And do you think he noticed it — and cared?"

"I could n't see his face but I jedged by his vocal tones that he was atrying to get jest one relaxing word from you before he started to go. Taint strange he thought you felt awful hard towards him on account of him reporting about Dorr and getting him dispelled. It was hard enough for him to do sech a thing, dear, without you letting him think you blamed him."

"Blamed him! It was splendid of him. He had to ack conterry to every prompting of that great heart of his." Then, after a pause, "I wonder if she would n't have relented if she reely knew how fine he was. I wonder if she reely *knew* him at all."

Just then I saw the tall figger of a man acoming along the street, that paused and looked up and then come up our steps. It was agetting duskier but I could see even through the snow who it was. Lois had jest been asaying that she would hate to see that beautiful covering of snow on the street marred up by a foot-print, but I guess it would make a differance whose prints they was. I aint heard her make no fuss about it since.

He said he 'd come to see if Lois was sick on account of us not having no telephone in the house.

I left them in the parlor while I went to get a lamp, but did n't hurry back with it on account of it not being quite dark enough for

one yet and being time for me to start in agetting supper ready.

She must have been more sosheble with him than what she was before because they got to referring about what he 'd said about his past as I was asetting the table in the nex room and I heard quite a lot of what was said.

" Would you like to have me tell you about her? " I heard him say.

" O I should like so much to hear about her," says Lois. " You said she was beautiful? "

" *Very* — but with a beauty wholly unlike yours. She was small and vivid and glowing, full of caprice, yet full of unspeakable charm. It was many years ago that I knew her, yet in all the years since, I have never met a woman who possessed the magnetical quality that was hers. To be sure I took a boy's view of it then and saw all with a boy's adoring eyes but as I look back I can see that her influence must have been the same with all. She was very young — scarcely more than a child — yet even then she could not fail to recker-

nize her power. She had the whole of her small social cercle at her feet. Had she lived she would have been a great power — in some way."

"She died?" Lois voice was very low and pitying.

"Yes, soon afterward."

Then his voice got lower and I did n't hear much more until he said,

"I was a teacher in the small Maine town that was her home. She — "

At this Lois riz up and went over and stood near him, "May I ask how long it was ago?"

"Nearly nineteen years" with the exactment of a person that 's got reason to mark off every year distinck.

"Was she Annis Spinney?"

"Annis Spinney?" There was amazement in his voice. "What do you know of her?"

Then Lois says, "I am Annis Spinney's daughter."

PROVIDENCE, March 25.

WELL, we 've been in kind of a daze all day. We can't believe it 's real — I mean about Professor Engarde being the school-master down at Woppidentneck that was in love with Annis all them years ago. I guess it was the first time I 'd seen Ed so surprised he did n't have a word to say. As for Granny she 's kind of slow about taking things in and she aint reely sensed it yet. Sis says it aint got only skin-deep yet. Mame is the only one that it 's set atalking and she *is* atalking. She 's aviewing it from every aspeck and derection and setting forth her views and ruminating out loud about what might have been. But when it come to her that the might-have-been theary would have excludified Lois, Lois that we all set sech store by and Mame herself can't do too much for, and her setting sech a good example for Sis (though little Sis is so set in her ways she

wont ever pattern after anyone — she 's too much like Mother) she jest says, " Well, I don't know but it 's aturning out tip-top." There 's times when we 're foarced to give divine Providence our approval.

Lois and I had another little talk to-night in the twilight. We aint hardly swapped a word about it all day, but I knew by her face how quietly happy she 's been. We was together same as last night in the setting-room and she came over and set down on a little foot-stool and laid her head down in my lap.

" Aint it beautiful, Aunt Jennie! " she says. " Aint it beautiful about him being so true to his first love when she never cared for him at all. You know some say that men soon forget, but he never has and he never will."

" Now," I says, astroking her pretty hair, " don't you be so sure about that, dear. I got an idea that he 's afalling in love with somebody else now."

She raised her head, a hurt look in her face. " O no, no! " she says, " not after all these

years. Who is the woman? Has Uncle Ed heard something? O I know it is n't true! I know he 'll never forget my pretty little Mother! I should n't honor him so if he did that!"

"And so, Lois," I says, "you want him to live single to the end of his days without wife or home or children?"

She looked awful serious at this and then she says, "I did n't say that. It 's only that I think it 's the only thing he, being he, can do, and I honor him for it. Maybe — O Aunt Jennie! I just *can't* be so unselfish as you. I can't bear to think of him being happy with another woman and forgetting Mother."

Then, "Auntie, do you think he 'll come again? Or do you think it will be too painful for him to meet Granny and Uncle Ed?"

"Did n't he say nothing about coming again?"

"No, we was both so took by surprise that neither one of us hardly spoke after that. When I told him who I was he riz to his

feet, a great wonder in his face, and looked down at me with oh! sech an expression in his eyes! I can't ever forget it. I *know* he was searching my face for a look like Mother. Then " — (she 'd hid her face again in my lap) " then — he drawed me up close to him and bent over me and — and kissed my hair. 'Annis's little girl,' he says. 'Annis's little girl!' Then he took up his hat and was gone."

I thought of Ed's first kiss and all it meant to me, and I put my arms close around her while her face stayed hidden on my gnees.

PROVIDENCE, April 11.

MIDDLING fair.

There was a party up to Pembroke last evening and the Professor walked home with Lois after it.

She asked me to come into her room after she 'd gone upstairs and she said it was because she wanted to tell me what a nice talk they 'd had acoming home. Something had led up to it and she told him how folks should honor anybody like him that remained true till death to his first love.

"And Aunt Jennie," she says, "it shows how moddest he is about having sech appreciation because he sobered right down and changed the subjeck. And it 's so every time I say anything about it, especielly when I add that that faithfulness is what makes him a very prince among men to me."

" I guess," I says, " I would n't express myself quite so strong as that. I don't know as it 's what they call good taste, dear."

" O I did n't think of that. And I did n't *blurk* it out. It jest came up nachelly in the conversation when he was talking about Irving, that was so faithful to *his* early love, you know. He was talking so elloquant about Irving's style but when I made them remarks he did n't say nothing more about him."

" Was it Irving you was atalking about so long on the door step? "

" Yes — and Metterlink and Shopenhower."

" Well, seems to me I 'd dwell the most on them last 2 critters next time."

PROVIDENCE, April 19.

PLEASANT as can be.

Got my washing out at eight o'clock this morning and they looked white as lillys.

Lois has jest got a letter from Dorr Edgerly. In it he says he 'll enter another colledge in the fall and go through straight as a die if she will only give him a word of encurragement about caring for him and about his whole life being blarsted and no good to a living soul same as young tree is blarsted in a storm if she says she wont.

Hard as it will be for Lois she will have to send back that sad, that bitter word — *wont*. She feels that any other word than that would be dangling out false hopes. Any other word than that would be conterry to the openness and the frankness of her disposition and her constitution.

In the eyes of the world she is renouncing an excellent mach but the eyes of the world needs stronger spectacles than it usually wears to see behind and into things like this. All the same I am greaved about Dorr.

PROVIDENCE, April 21.

CLOUDY, but as if the sun might break through any time.

In yesterday morning's paper it told how Professor Engarde had been called to set in a chair of biology in a University in Germany and he had excepted and what a great honor it was and how much regret was being exercised about it at Brown and how he already had an internashenal reputation that reached from pole to pole.

Lois saw it when she was asetting at the breakfast table. I did n't know then what she was areading, but I saw her face grow white and lay the paper down and pressantly go up to her room.

It ain't her way to show her fealings at the time so I did n't say nothing. I know she 'll come to me about it before very long. Poor child! I know she carried a heart ache to colledge with her and she forgot her Greak grammer.

April 23.

I SAID once I wisht there was more than me to see Lois's face when it was the prettyest but I guess it aint ever looked it's very prettyest till last night.

The Professor called in the evening and stayed a long time. I helped Lois entertain him as she wanted me partickler to do but there was sech a sight of mending to be done and it was n't a suitable kind to be took into the presence of sech a high-toned gentleman, so I went out into the dining-room and got afowl of it soon as I could.

Him and her talked so low I could n't hear nothing that was said and furthermore than that they wan't asetting where I could see them in the corner without streching my neck.

I did n't strech it.

He stayed pretty late and when he 'd gone Lois came out to me, her face ashining.

" O, Aunt Jennie ! " she says, acuddling down at my feet, " Aunt Jennie ! "

" Yes, dear," I says, " that 's me. I 'm right here."

" It 's jest wonderful," she says, her eyes looking down at the work in my hand.

" Yes," I says, " it is. Your uncle Ed aint had these stockings 2 weeks and they don't seem to be anything but a rim round a hole. Lois, you 'd ought to help me with these stockings."

" Yes (dreamily) I suppose so. How beautiful it will be."

" I would n't say *that*," I says.

" Aunt Jennie " (in a reproachative tone) " why did n't you tell me? He says he 'd already spoke to you and Uncle Ed. You see I wan't in the least prepared for it," alooking up kind of shy but laughing happily.

I did n't say nothing to defenduate myself and she went on.

" The way he began was to ask me if I 'd heard he was agoing to Germany, and when

I said ' yes,' he says, ' And I hope I aint agoing alone. I expeck to take my wife with me.'

" ' Your wife? ' "

I can't tell you the terrible way my heart sank and how everything seemed to fade away.

" ' Yes,' he says. ' A memmery can be a very beautiful thing, Lois, and can be an insentive in a man's life to everything high and good. But it 's a lonely thing to take with you into a forren land. It 's then that a man needs the clasp of a warm living hand, the grace of a happy young laugh, and to seek insperration in young and ardent eyes. O, I hope I can take all these things away with me.'

" ' Then you are not sure? '

" ' Not quite. I have n't asked her yet.'

" ' To go with you? '

" ' To be my wife.'

" ' As if she would refuse! I burst out kind of bitter. ' Who would the woman be who would refuse to go with you! "

" ' I hope it would not be Lois Treverton,'

he says, taking aholt of my hand. 'Lois, I am asking you now. Will you go to Germany with me?'

"And I spoke my answer straight to his heart for my face was pressed so close against it that his ears could n't catch it at all."

PROVIDENCE, May 15.

(*Dictuated by me to Sis — as Ed says, my amanuenSis*)

WHAT is my baby agoing to be
Agoing to be, agoing to be?
Will he be a farmer blithe and gay
Planting the corn and making the hay,
Buisy and happy the livelong day?
Is that what my baby will be?

What is my baby agoing to be
Agoing to be, agoing to be?
O will he be a baker man
Delving with rolling-pin, platter, and pan
To make sweet cakes for Dickey and Nan?
Is that what my baby will be?

O what is my baby agoing to be,
Agoing to be, agoing to be?
Will he be a sailer strong and brave
Who when skys are dark and tempests rave
Steers his ship safe o'er the raging wave?
Is that what my baby will be?

O what is my baby agoing to be,
Agoing to be, agoing to be?
Will he be a doctor full of loar
And carry health from door to door
So the sick shall never suffer more?
Is that what my baby will be?

What is my baby agoing to be
Agoing to be, agoing to be?
Will he be a parson to preach and pray
Give out the hym on the Sabbath day?
And teach us to walk in the blessed way?
Is that what my baby will be?

I know what my baby 's agoing to be
Agoing to be, agoing to be.
Whatever his hands will find to do
He 'll be his mother's sweetheart true
To cheer her and love her her whole life through,
And that 's what my baby will be.

This is the song Lois is singing down stairs and I am alaying up here in my bedroom and listening to it. It 's too far away for me to

ketch many of the words and yet I know what they are — every single one. And the reason I know them so well — it don't seem sense but it 's true — the reason I know every single word of that poetry is because I made it up myself, all myself. No, I don't know as I can rightly say that, because the fack is it jest come to me when I was alaying here with Baby. And Ed says (pretending to be jellos of Baby) that my insperration has come at last.

These are sech blissfull days that *everything* seems like poetry. The sparrows twitter it, the dogs bark it, even the carts in the street rumble it. And as for the street peanner or Lois's singing I almost can't stand their sweetness and soon as they start up the tears roll down my cheeks jest because I 'm so happy.

But I was jest agoing to say she aint set the notes down in a reguler way but she makes up the tune as she sings along and it 's prettyer far than a written-down song.

I know where she gets *her* insperration.

Ed says she sung it for the Professer when

he was here last evening and it 's proof enough it 's fine poetry when a learned man like him wanted to hear it again and again. He says the Professer watched her while she was asinging as if he could n't take his eyes offen her for fear of loosing one word. And when she 'd stoped singing it the second time at his request he went over to the peanner and says, " O Lois! Jest the last verse again? I love that last verse." And Lois laughed but she sung the last verse again. And it made Ed so proud of me!

The Professer sent up his regards and congratulated me, as he said, on both of my little poems, (he means the baby for one) and he 's acoming jest as soon as he will be let to call on Edward Joseph Junior.

I know he 'll says he 's his father right over again all but his nose. Granny says so and wont even leave out the nose and furthermore than that she says he 's got lots of little ways his father had at his age — 2 weeks to-morrer.

Ed 's as proud as any king of that child

and hangs over him awatching him all his spare time. But than I don't know as he is much worse than the rest of the folks in the house. Jim set a long time alooking at him very thoughtful yesterday and then he says,

" The little feller 's got a look like Jamesy to me." Then he got up and looked out of the winder quite a spell and then went out, sideways so I could n't see his face. First time I 'd ever heard him mention Jamesy since we lost him. What a comfort it 'll be if the baby 's jest a little like our little boy that 's gone.

Lois has jest brought me up some gruel. She made it herself. When Sis see it she says, " Why you 've put nuts in it, have n't you? "

But it was only that it was lumpy. But I ate between the lumps and it tasted reel good.

Later.

O the beautiful prassants that 's been sent to the baby. I can't name them now but I have them kep in sight so I can look at them

all the time. The most curious ones is from Mrs. Loretty Maria and Cappen Joe Sillike consisting as they do of a monkey and a peach both calved out of ebbony wood. They got one of them queer looking forreners to do it apurpose for the baby when they was in Mexico. They say it looks strange to see everybody round you a forrener.

Natalie sent the crissening-dress, a tendar little heap of lace like frost work and that 's alaying close beside me so I can reach out and pat it or lay my cheek against it. It 's fit for a little prince but Natalie said in her letter that our boy *is* a little prince.

The great bunch of white roses is from Willie Jameson, the minnister that marryed us and Jim's childhood friend. On one side of the card was wrote: " For *Her* little Grandson." He meant Mother. Willie Jameson, now the great Doctor Jameson of New York, is the one Mother was so good to when he was little and poor and freindless. He worships her memmery.

Mandy has given him a nice large jackgnife. She says time flys and he 'll soon grow to it and furthermore than that, there won't be no duplikets. Mame says she hopes *that* aint so.

This morning I took notice how white my hands had growed since I 'd stopped work and how nice the one looked with the pretty ring on it that Natalie give me. Ed noticed it, too, when he come in to bid me good-by before going to the offiss. My eyes was closed and he thoght that I was asleep like Baby. So he jest stooped down and kissed the hand very gentle that was alaying on the crissening robe. But when I opened my eyes and smiled up at him he did n't smile back, " Jennie," he says, aholding the hand in his and looking thoughtfully down at it, " I wisht I was a rich man. I wisht my wife's hands could be kep like this always — white and pretty."

" No, no! " I says, " never! As long as my heart beats for you and Baby my hands must work for you, too. There must always be

a ballence between them — between love and laber, I mean. It 's the way I 'm made. It 's differant with Lois and Natalie."

" Yes," he answers even while he looked down with regret at the unusual whiteness, " Yes, I guess you 're right, dear, same as you always are. And Lois and Natalie with their white and idle fingers can never know love like yours."

Then his glance fell on Sis's progressive maps that was alaying on the table by my bedside and that she 'd broght up to show me where she 'd painted Rhode Island in the very day Baby was born. Ed was tickled enough when he saw the new bit of pink color for he knew in a minnet what it meant.

" Yes, there he is! " he says laughing fondly as he looked down on the pretty heart map. " How well Sis knew there 's been all along a place awaiting for little Rhody! "

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